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A TAMARISK
BLESSED WITH
The Autobiography

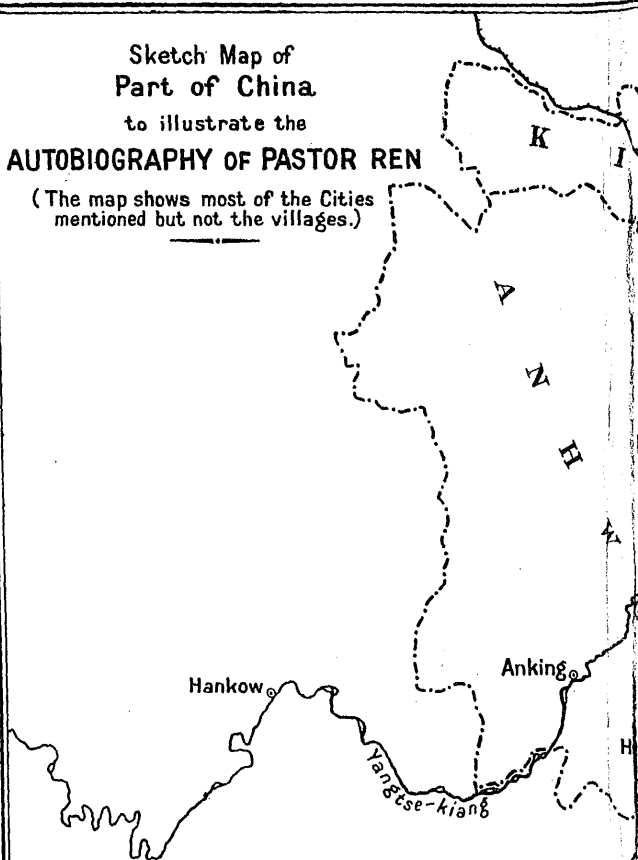
聖園雨露

RISK GARDEN
WITH RAIN

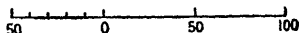
graphy of Pastor Ren

Sketch Map of
Part of China
to illustrate the
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PASTOR REN

(The map shows most of the Cities
mentioned but not the villages.)



Scale of Miles





A TAMARISK GARDEN
BLESSED WITH RAIN

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FACSIMILE, SLIGHTLY REDUCED, OF THE ORIGINAL TITLE-PAGE.

The Chinese characters on the Title-page of this English version are from the
Cover of the Original Volume.



PASTOR REN CH'ENG-YÜAN.

This is the last photograph taken : an earlier one is shown on the paper Jacket.

Frontispiece.

A TAMARISK GARDEN BLESSED WITH RAIN

OR

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
PASTOR REN

Ren, Cheng-yüan

Translated & Edited by
HERBERT HUDSON TAYLOR
& MARSHALL BROOMHALL

'Thou shalt be like
A Watered Garden'

ISAIAH lviii. 11

杭州內地會牧師任樺園雨露記

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CONCERNING THE TITLE

WHEN Pastor Ren was ordained he adopted the personal name of *Nai-ch'eng*, or The Tamarisk. When he published his Autobiography he expanded this to *Ch'eng-yüan*, or The Tamarisk Garden. The Tamarisk (*Tamarix Sinensis*) is described by the Chinese as a "willow" with a reddish bark and graceful shape. They sometimes call it "Third Spring Willow" because it flowers late. It is said to fear neither snow nor frost; but to be sensitive to approaching rain which it indicates by its branches moving. The name was chosen by Pastor Ren because of these special characteristics.

The title of the book, *Ch'eng-yüan yü lu chi*, which is translated *A Tamarisk Garden Blessed with Rain*, so as to convey to the English reader the oriental fragrance of the original, may be compared with the words of Isaac when he blessed Jacob: "A field which the Lord hath blessed: God give thee of the dew of heaven."

CONCERNING THE GENEALOGY

PASTOR REN traced his ancestry back to the Chou Dynasty, 1122-255 B.C. The founder of his Clan was born and held office in Hupeh. Because of his faithful fulfilment of duty the Government bestowed upon him the surname *Ren* which means "Trustworthy." At that time surnames were uncommon.

When the fame of Confucius (551-479 B.C.) reached this ancestor he moved to Shantung that he might become a disciple of the great sage. During the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618-913) he received the posthumous honours, first of Earl, and then of Marquis.

One branch of this Clan subsequently settled in Wumen, the present Soochow, and from this branch Pastor Ren was descended, as the opening chapter relates.

Pastor Ren delighted in his Clan name *Ren*, or "Trustworthy," and felt its implications to him as a steward entrusted with the Gospel. His personal name on the family register was *Ching-rung* or "Bright Glory." At his baptism he adopted the name of *Nai-ch'eng* or "Tamarisk Tree," and later expanded this to *Ch'eng-yüan* or "A Tamarisk Garden."

Pastor Ren was born on February 18, 1852; was baptised December 19, 1869; was ordained June 24, 1877; died February 11, 1929.

TRIBUTES

*From the Right Rev. Bishop HERBERT J. MOLONY,
formerly Bishop of Mid-China*

Pastor Ren of Hangchow was an instance, fortunately not uncommon in China, of a fine Chinese thoroughly converted to the Lord.

There are many great men in China whose otherwise noble characters have been marred by pride or avarice. Pastor Ren also was a great and attractive man, but in his case his whole life was devoted to the service of the Master. He made many converts, and they were strongly attached to him. He was the great Christian of Hangchow, and his attractive and commanding personality will cause him to be remembered as one of the Apostles of the Church in Chekiang.

*From Dr. D. DUNCAN MAIN, of the Church Missionary
Society*

Yes, Pastor Ren was a saint, and not only a saint but a man singularly attractive, radiating sunshine and sympathy wherever he went. As a Pastor he was unremitting in his zeal, and was always a kind friend and helpful adviser. And as a Preacher his theme was always the Gospel of Jesus and His love. There was no modern millinery about it. His was a quiet and practical piety, and in his preaching as in his life the practical virtues, humility, charity, and unselfishness had a foremost place.

He was a very practical, thorough business-like Christian, and might easily have made a name for himself and won distinction had he gone into business. But Christ's Gospel, and the salvation of his fellowmen lay nearer to his heart than all else beside. I had a great admiration for him, and for forty-six years we were in touch with each other. His name will live for ever.

*By the Rev. W. H. WARREN, Superintendent of the
China Inland Mission Work in Chekiang*

Pastor Ren was a man of outstanding ability, and would have been a force to reckon with in any calling in life. He early chose to walk in the way of the Lord, and amid all the vicissitudes of life held firmly to his guiding principle. Having once set his hand to the plough he never seemed to look back, but with steady perseverance moved forward as led by the Spirit of God. His business capacity found an outlet in building up an endowment for the carrying on of the work under his care, without assistance from foreign funds. The object before him has ever been a self-contained, self-supporting, and Chinese-controlled organisation. No trace of an anti-foreign attitude was ever detected. He rightly expected his position to be recognised, and then heartily welcomed the assistance and the co-operation of the missionary.

He was the pivot upon which all turned, both in the family and the churches under his care. His control was autocratic, so that he found it very difficult to delegate authority, with the result that the work has centred round himself. This fact causes some doubt as to the possibility of its continuing as a unit.

Pastor Ren has lived a lonely life, much apart from his fellows. In all his arrangements for the development of his

work he has maintained an attitude of reserve that did not allow him to permit others to share his confidence in any marked degree. In all practical details, such as the purchase of land, the drawing up of deeds, or anything requiring intercourse with Chinese officials, he was regarded as the final authority in Hangchow Christian circles. And he was ever ready to place his knowledge at the disposal of any society.

There is an association of Chinese pastors in existence at Hangchow, whose members hold regular meetings for mutual intercourse and prayer. Pastor Ren was a tower of strength in such an assembly. We have been told that time and time again, when difficulties of church government, of discipline, or what not, have engaged the attention of the brethren, perplexed their minds, and presented an apparently insoluble problem, this man has sat, saying very little, with an inscrutable countenance, hearing and weighing all the others had to say, then finally giving the clue, indicating the direction for action, and so finding a way through the maze.

Pastor Ren's outstanding characteristics were chiefly manifested in four directions, which together have combined to give him a unique position, and have enabled him to maintain a consistent stand ever since he became a Christian, more than sixty years ago.

I. The Long Vision.—He was not caught by the lure of any new movement, or entrapped by any passing emotion. His gaze was steady and penetrating, seeking underlying principles, and not superficial attractions. He desired to reach those things that endure, and refused to be enticed by what seemed to promise an easily attained success and a cheap popularity. He lived deeply, would not be hurried to hasty conclusions. He even annoyed some by what seemed to them an over-cautious tendency, and an unwillingness

to commit himself to a decision. Criticisms of this character did not disturb him; his eye was on the goal, and if his progress seemed slow it was steady.

2. *A Grasp of Detail.*—This gift, perhaps, is not often associated with the characteristics already mentioned. In ordinary men the one more or less excludes the other. But in Pastor Ren they seemed complementary and in unison. As a straw can show the current, so a slight indication gives to the keen investigator the information needed. But this involves unwearying patience. But once upon the track it will be pursued quietly, almost secretly, until the solution is found, or the purpose accomplished.

3. *Fidelity to the Word of God.*—The Word of God was precious to the Pastor. He delighted to ponder it, and to expound it, often at great length. Times and seasons had little meaning for him, and the congregation would often be physically worn out long before the preacher had any apparent sense of fatigue. The doctrines of grace he held with unwavering tenacity; and was not to be moved from the principles of the doctrine of Christ. He read a great deal, and it was surprising to find how up-to-date his knowledge was of current Christian literature, of present-day events, and of the general tendencies of thought. He never seemed to swerve from his allegiance to the Scriptures, or to have doubts as to the faithfulness of God. So he spake with conviction, and the trumpet of his speech gave no uncertain sound.

4. Finally, Pastor Ren was a spiritual man, and a firm believer in the power of prayer. He often encountered those who differed from him in method and procedure. On occasion he was misunderstood, and at times not appreciated. But all fair-minded persons conceded that his motives were pure, his desires centred on spiritual results, and his belief that more was to be wrought by prayer than by the exercise

of his own wisdom. Such a man was a gift of God to his own Church, to his community, to the Mission with which he maintained a close connection all his life, and to the whole Christian Body of China.

Recently a movement was on foot to establish a Chinese Church in his neighbourhood which should sever all connection with foreign Missionary Societies, and be solely Chinese for the Chinese. The Pastor would have none of it, and was much called in question for the stand he took, that in Christ we are all one, whether Jew or Gentile, East or West, Anglican or Free Church, and he would be no party to breaking the spiritual unity of the Body of Christ.

EDITORIAL FOREWORD

SEVERAL years ago, when in China, the writer of this foreword learned that Pastor Ren had published in Chinese his Autobiography. Thinking that this would provide helpful material for an English Life of this distinguished Christian leader, we discussed the matter with Pastor Ren himself and others. Pastor Ren entered heartily into the suggestion, and Mr. Herbert Hudson Taylor, the writer's cousin, kindly undertook to provide an English translation of the Autobiography, to facilitate the work. As the original is in *Wenli*, Classical Chinese, this was a somewhat laborious task, especially as the identification of a number of persons, Foreign Ministers, Consuls, and Missionaries, by their adopted Chinese names, and many other obscurities, called for considerable correspondence and research.

This translation work was carried out under those conditions which are common to all missionary work in China to-day, and the manuscript has not been without its vicissitudes. It was happily saved when a fire destroyed the Mission premises at Nan-sing-k'iao, Hangchow; and it was preserved, when nearly everything else was lost, when Mr. Herbert Taylor had hurriedly, at Consul's orders, to evacuate the Mission premises in Chinkiang before the advance of the Southern Army in March 1927.

When the writer of this foreword was able to take the task in hand, it soon became apparent that the original intention of writing a new Life must be abandoned, and that only by retaining the book in its autobiographical form would the fullest insight into Pastor Ren's character and life be preserved. But Mr. Herbert Taylor's translation had not been intended for publication. It was too literal for the English reader, being designed as material for rewriting. Further, in extent alone it would have demanded a book nearly twice the size of the present volume, and would thus have been too large and too expensive for popular use. It therefore fell to the present writer to revise, condense, and edit his cousin's translation for the English reader. In this work, a copy of the original book has always been at hand for reference. But it should be said that the heavier share of this joint task fell to Mr. Herbert Taylor, and without his painstaking labours it is improbable that this book would have seen an English version.

A word or two are necessary about the guiding principles which have governed this work of revision. The original book teems with names of Chinese persons and places; of converts, preachers, and persecutors; of villages, towns, and cities. As these would inevitably confuse the ordinary English reader, these have been eliminated wherever that was consistent with lucidity. Chinese chronology has given place to our Western calendar. Condensation has not always been uniform; some chapters have been given in full; others have been drastically summarised. Our chief desire has been to make the story easily intelligible to the average reader at home, with as little sacrifice as possible. We have sought that this English rendering, though condensed and edited, should be a fair representation of the

original in its essential elements. Nothing has been added, except in footnotes.

Dean Church in his *Life of Bacon* has truly said that "what one nation takes for granted is incomprehensible to its neighbour." This truth has been before us in our task, and where adequate explanation has not been possible, some omissions have been made rather than reproduce what would be incomprehensible and even misleading to those without local knowledge. But such details do not materially affect the story.

This Autobiography of a Chinese will we believe and hope prove valuable for several reasons. Not only does it tell an interesting story, but it reveals the inner workings of the Chinese mind, how deeply rooted it is in the past, and how noble a place filial piety has had among its more worthy citizens. It will portray the power and progress of the Gospel among a non-Christian people. It will illustrate the ability of the Chinese to manage the affairs of their own Churches, an aspect naturally and rightly much to the front to-day. Incidentally, it will show how alive Mr. Hudson Taylor, the Founder of the China Inland Mission, was from the first to raise up and establish self-supporting churches. It will also make evident, in part at least, the difficulties which confront the Church in China, the persecutions she has had and still has to face, as well as the duplicity and venality which surround her. Personally, we have marvelled at the fearlessness and the frankness with which Pastor Ren has told his story. But that would have been more easy and less perilous when he published it, than it would have been since the more recent spread of communism and its accompanying lawlessness.

In conclusion, it remains to be said that though Mr. Herbert Hudson Taylor, who is in China, has borne the

heavier burden of the work of translation, as mentioned above, the writer of this foreword must accept full responsibility for the form in which the book now appears. The writer also desires to acknowledge the ready and valuable help which has been rendered by several friends both in China and at home, to whom obscure passages and other difficulties have been referred. Especially would we express our indebtedness to the Rev. W. H. Warren, the intimate friend of Pastor Ren, with whom we have been in constant correspondence while this work has been in hand.

It only remains for us to add that the publication of this Autobiography by the China Inland Mission does not imply an unqualified approval of Pastor Ren's attitude to every subject mentioned. It will be remembered that his relationship to the Chinese Authorities was that of a Chinese subject; and his relationship to the Mission was that of a Pastor to self-supporting Churches.

MARSHALL BROOMHALL.

CHINA INLAND MISSION, LONDON,

Midsummer, 1930.

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BOOK I
FROM YOUTH UNTIL BAPTISM
FROM THE SECOND YEAR OF HSIEN FENG
TO
THE EIGHTH YEAR OF T'UNG CHIH
1852-1869

FROM YOUTH UNTIL BAPTISM

I. PAST GENERATIONS

DURING the closing days of the Mongol Dynasty [A.D. 1280-1368], when the soldiers were in mutiny, the years in famine, and the officials oppressive, my great ancestor, I Fu-kong, whose family seat was in Wumen, near Soochow, went to Peking, the metropolitan city. But seeing that the government was decadent, and that the dynasty was doomed, he promptly returned home. Taking his grandparents, parents, and kinsmen with him, he moved his abode and became a stranger in a strange city, now known as Changchow, bordering on the Tung-rung Lake. Here he lived in seclusion, farming and studying, until the third year of the reign of Hung Wu of the Ming Dynasty [A.D. 1371]. By filial piety and friendship he consolidated the family which henceforth became a Clan.

My father, according to the Clan register, was the eighteenth generation from this great ancestor, I Fu-kong. At the age of fifteen he finished his studies and went to Soochow to learn the trade of soy¹ making. The name of the proprietor of this business was Ch'en, and his son, a youth two years younger than my father, was his partner. He was of a kind and conciliatory disposition. He delighted in study, and after graduation bought the

¹ Soy is a liquid condiment.

office of district magistrate. He was the unswerving friend of my father.

I was born in Soochow on February 18, 1852, my father being then fifty-two years of age. When I was only three years old my mother died, but the "Mother of the House" cherished me as though I had been her own child. And Mr. and Mrs. Ch'en, who had only two daughters, loved me as though I were their own son.

When I was six years old my father engaged a scholar from Nanking to superintend my education. This was probably at Mr. Ch'en's suggestion, for my father, who esteemed both fame and riches lightly, informed me that what he coveted for me was a lofty standard in virtue and morals. Subsequently, I discerned God's mercy toward me, in giving me this knowledge of Nankingese.

In the winter of 1861 the Taiping rebels captured Hangchow, while Soochow was sorely beset. At this difficult juncture, Mr. Ch'en received the appointment of district magistrate to Kiating city. My father strongly urged upon him delay in assuming office, but Mr. Ch'en replied: "The man who, seeing danger, refrains from obeying orders will not only be held responsible for knowledge, but for being a transgressor against Confucius." To this my father said: "I, being without office, shall conform to the military tactics of my ancestors, and flee. Let each one go where he thinks duty calls!" In this way our separation from the Ch'en family took place, after an acquaintance of forty-seven years. My father was then sixty-two years of age. Without our knowing it this separation was for life.

2. MY EDUCATION

My father helped his family to flee to the old family seat in January 1862. Though the Taiping rebels came down from Nanking, with a force like the rending of bamboo-trees, and captured the chief cities, the country districts were comparatively unmolested. At that time I was eleven years of age, and was studying under two of my clansmen. They said that I had more than ordinary ability, and had a brilliant future before me. Stimulated by such praise I became more assiduous in my studies, regarding time as gold, until I became sick.

When my uncle [being avaricious] heard what my teachers anticipated for me, he said: "Let him be extravagant, and waste his substance in riotous living." At the time I did not lay this to heart, but when I was sixteen, and two of my fellow-clansmen swindled me out of my patrimony, I recalled it to mind, and was fortified thereby.

The same year there was a person selling prints of the Goddess of Mercy, and saying that anyone who worshipped this image for seven years would become an immortal. On hearing this my heart went out in strong desire; I therefore bought a print and, having on my knees informed my father, I hung it up in my bedroom, and worshipped it night and morning. Before this I had been as one intoxicated with a desire for personal glory; but now I became as one who had taken a long course of some cooling, cleansing medicine. My health and strength returned, and there was no further need for drugs.

3. TAKEN CAPTIVE

In 1863, when paying a New Year's call upon some of my kinsfolk, I suddenly encountered the Taiping rebels and was taken captive by a trooper named Wang. I was filled with sorrow. But after I had been in their hands for two days, and had not been harshly treated, I plucked up courage and said: "In taking me captive you have done an unrighteous deed." Startled, they asked me why? I replied: "My venerable father begat me, his only son, when he was more than fifty years old; and now he will certainly die of grief." They thereupon promised me that when they moved their camp they would set me free; but that they themselves might be captured if they released me at once.

Before this time came, the head of that company, a man named Kao, came to receive the plunder and take it away by boat, and I was called upon to be one of his attendants. I was frightened and much cast down. When I was sent on board, I went at once to the stern of the boat, and chatted with the boatmen, hoping to find some way of escape. At midnight we started, and by noon next day reached the camp outside the city of Changchow. On entering my captor's quarters, I saw a young woman of about twenty years of age, who was evidently his wife, together with an old dame who was acting as cook.

When washing my face in the kitchen I heard this old dame say: "This child's parents will certainly weep to death." These words so deeply moved me that tears began to flow down my face like rain. Fearing this might be noticed, I made a pretence of wiping my face; but the tears would not cease. Moreover, as I was urged to go outside to take my food, I could not conceal my tears. During the meal my captor asked me how old I was, and

whether my parents were alive. I replied that I was twelve years of age, and that both my parents were dead. He then asked if I was poor or rich; and I told him I was poor. When he inquired if I desired to return home, or was willing to remain, I said that I was willing to stay. He thereupon commanded his wife to treat me as a son, and he gave me the name of "Heavenly Joy."

At night I slept in their apartment, but because I was not willing to call my captor's wife "mother," she sought to create ill-will against me. She asserted: "It is not true that this boy's father and mother are dead or that his family is poor. Do not believe his lies." I was much frightened, but my captor still commanded her to treat me well, saying: "Our success in this business cannot last for ever, and we shall ere long have to return to our former sphere. Since you may have no son of your own you had better adopt this one." For this reason she treated me well.

4. I ESCAPE

A few days later my captor was ordered to take a company of soldiers and attack Kiangsi. At first he purposed taking me with him, but was dissuaded because of my youth. When he had gone, there were only four of us left in the house, my captor's wife, the old dame, her daughter, and myself. To prevent my escape my captor's wife would not permit me to go a single step beyond the door; while at night she compelled me to sleep in her room and in the same bed. In addition she hung a bell upon the bedroom door. She would not allow me to move, or to get up in the morning before she did. No loophole for escape was left unguarded.

Fortunately, before my captor had left, he had engaged a number of men to carry his loot, and having

ascertained from one of these men where his home was, I agreed to pay him the sum of thirty dollars if he would give me shelter should I escape.

In a roundabout way I heard that my captor had not found the raid into Kiangsi profitable, and that he was about to return to camp. This troubled me. The old dame, in her kindness, remarked: "If you lose this opportunity to escape, you will not have another chance." Fearing lest any words of mine might be repeated, I made no reply. A little later she said in a more urgent manner: "Your captor's wife is a cruel woman. I have seen her pursue her servant-boy with a sword and beat him without mercy." But I only smiled at the remark.

One day, when, owing to an ulcer on her foot, my captor's wife could not sleep, I resolved to escape. After a restless night she fell into a deep slumber toward morning. I seized the opportunity and opened the door, but the bell rang, and roused her. Happily, when I said that it was already late, she went off to sleep again. I slipped into the kitchen and secured a basket and the kitchen knife. I then made for the entrance of the camp, and the sentry, seeing that I had the basket and kitchen knife, let me pass. Moving in a manner so as to disarm suspicion, I got well away and found refuge in the home of one of the people.

In the afternoon, the old dame, who had traced me, came and warned me that a search would probably be made. Hearing this the people of the house took one of the large water-pots, turned it upside-down, and after placing me inside put a brick under the rim to afford me some ventilation. When it was dusk, and the soldiers had returned to camp, I was released. To avoid detection I exchanged my bright clothes for old garments, besmeared my flowery shoes with coal-dust, and early in

the morning I was escorted back to my home some ten miles away. Here I found my father haggard with grief, and almost beside himself with anxiety. My escort at first refused the proffered reward, but eventually they accepted three dollars apiece. The period of my captivity had been about a month and a half.

5. I MAKE A VOW

Later in the same year, word came that the Taiping rebels were about to raid Tungchow. My father, excusing himself from flight by reason of his age, entrusted me to others, so I fled in company with many of the people. When we arrived at a certain village, it being late, we rested in a large ancestral hall, where the benevolent villagers brought us food and straw-mats for beds. The night, being full moon, was as bright as day. Sitting with my back against one of the pillars, I gazed upon the pure bright moonlight, and even enjoyed it. As various emotions stirred my heart I longed to see my father, and wondered what the issue of all this trouble would be. When would this calamity cease? Could I escape? I had heard it said: "It is difficult to escape from a fated calamity." Was my fate decreed?

After long thought the brightness became dim, and when I awoke I again bethought myself: "There is a recompense for both good and evil. Am I one of the sinners or not?" As I thought I was too young to be included among the bad, I asked myself: "Whence then is this calamity? Is my father wicked?" But I knew that all his life he had been honest and sincere, without fault or evil. So again I asked myself: "Were my ancestors bad?" And I thought of my grandfather, whom I had never seen, but of whom all the clansmen had spoken

well. Moreover, there was the witness of the Ode, recorded in the Register, written when my grandfather was sixty years old. Though all this brought me some peace, I felt I was still lacking incontrovertible evidence, so I made the following vow: "If Highest Heaven will deliver me from this calamity, I will live according to the dictates of conscience to the end of my life, in everything doing that which is right."

I also recalled that men constantly affirmed that, "Of all that is good, filial piety comes first." I therefore examined myself on this score. I considered that my parents had been more than ordinarily kind to me, the only son of their old age, and although I had studied sedulously, I was only pleased when my parents fell in with my desires, and was annoyed when they crossed my wishes. There were times when I had made the "Mother of the House" to be ill at ease, and I perceived that this was inconsistent with filial piety. So I made another vow, saying: "When these troubles are over, no matter whether I have to work in the fields, to exert myself in harvesting, to carry faggots, or to draw water, or whether, becoming poor, I have to carry the wares of a small business on my own shoulders, or even come to beggary, I will still support my parents, and will never again commit the sin of stubbornness against their friendly confidences."

Having made my vow I rested tranquilly. The next day my father arrived drenched to the skin. He told me that the day before he had met the Taiping rebels, and because he was too feeble to carry burdens he had been exempt by the press-gang. In the middle of the night he had escaped from the village, but while the troopers were searching for him with lighted torches he had missed his footing on a bridge and fallen into the river.

Happily, the water was shallow, so that while his pursuers crossed the bridge he hid beneath it in the water. As soon as the band had returned from their fruitless search he had continued his flight.

When I heard all this I turned cold. But immediately I stripped off all my clothes and gave them to my father, while I took his soiled garments to wash them in the river. There were those who wished to do this for me, but I declined. Clad only in borrowed trousers I waited until my father's clothes were dry, and then each one donned his own.

In this village there was a worthy man who invited us to be his guests. But, alas! though I did my utmost for my father's comfort, it was not many days ere the Taping rebels came to that village also. All things were obscured by a heavy mist, when suddenly there was a pounding at the door. As soon as my father had opened it the rebels crowded in. I fled by the back door and hid in a shed filled with dry grain. But as the rebels stabbed into this grain with their long spears, there was nothing for it but for the seven of us, who were hiding there, to come out and be taken captive. My father was at the front door, leaning against the wall, when I was taken away. He looked at me, and I looked at him, but I dared not stop. Thus did we take our final farewell!

6. I MEET WITH DANGER

The day was extremely hot. Every shop and house we passed was without its door, and not one of them was without its dead. The river was filled with floating corpses, and my thirst was intense. Despite the loathsome condition of the stream I could not refrain from rinsing my mouth with the water, though I was careful

not to swallow any. Nonetheless, I was poisoned by it, and was in such pain that I could scarcely move. The rebels gave me burnt opium ash to eat, and had me carried to their chief encampment in a village in Huchow. There were about twenty troopers in this resort.

I found here two sisters-in-law who had been taken captive. One had been seized by the leader to be his wife, while the other one acted as sempstress. The elder one was about twenty years of age, but the young unmarried woman was some five years younger. One day she informed me that away behind the hills the Imperial troops had recaptured the city of Kiangyin, and it could not be long before they arrived. She also said that her mother-in-law was the sole surviving member of her family, and that if I escaped and would wait for her, I could become a member of her family. I heard, but made no reply. My heart was in my home, but as I heard that the Taiping rebels killed those who sought to escape I was much frightened. At night I prayed to my ancestors, and when I entered the kitchen I secretly worshipped the kitchen god. When I was out of doors I looked up to heaven and prayed within my heart.

There was another lad there who was a year older than I was, and we arranged to escape together. One day after breakfast we set off to cross the hills, but we were amazed to find ridge after ridge, and peak after peak. When the day began to wane I began to be anxious lest we should never get away from the hills, and lest we should meet with wild beasts at night. So I advised return, but he would not hear of it. He went on, but I went back, and fell into the hands of a company of the Flowery Bannermen who took me into captivity. These men were Cantonese. I had heard that these men were

exceedingly fierce and cruel, but while I was distressing myself on this account, we suddenly encountered a larger band belonging to the original company, called the Red Bannermen, and these came from the provinces of Kiangsu, Anhwei, and Kiangsi. I immediately hailed them and rushed into their midst. The Flowery Bannermen with angry cries rushed to seize me, and had it not been that they were overawed by superior numbers they must have recaptured me. It was only because it was thought that I had been taken prisoner by the Flowery Bannermen, and not that I had been guilty of absconding, that I escaped serious consequences. After this I felt as a bird which had escaped the bow, and I resolved not to be so rash as to flee again.

7. A FURTHER ADVENTURE

In the autumn, as the rebels were about to set forth on another plundering expedition, the leader gave orders for the rice to be steamed during the third watch, for the meal to be taken during the fourth watch, and to set forth during the fifth watch. The woman, whom the owner of the house had seized to be his wife, said to me: "Eat with them, but don't go with them. After they have had their food I will lie in wait for you." When the meal was finished she again made her furtive suggestion. Though I heard her I paid no attention, but accompanied the troops to several places while they plundered.

After the lapse of half a month we returned. I was both frightened and delighted. I had not fallen into the woman's trap, because I was sure that my ancestors would in secret reveal to me the Will of Heaven.

Every day the rebels indulged in the taking of cap-

tives and plunder, and in so doing they were gradually drawing nearer to Tungchow. When we were within about three miles of that place I began again to contemplate escape. By day and by night I schemed, being often bitter with disappointment, until it became intolerable. One day the leader of the band, having seized two pigs, ordered me to make some rice gruel. While thus engaged I was seized with a fit of anger and misery, and felt that death was to be preferred to life. I concluded that if I did get home I should find my parents dead. Should I not by dying see my father and mother in the nether world. So with a loud voice I bitterly cursed the chief, quite willing to be killed. In his wrath he beat me soundly, but I did not heed the pain. The troopers interposed, and urged him to refrain. That night I could not sleep for meditating on the necessity of escape.

After breakfast next day, I told the men that as their chief had not killed me I meant to flee. One man threatened to report me, but another urged that I should not speak thus if I seriously intended doing so. "Where could he go?" they said. After I had left them I fled, but when I approached the village of Tungchow, and saw the red banners flying everywhere, my courage failed, and I dared not go forward. Catching sight of some thatched cottages I went to gain information, and then I learned that my parents were dead, and their bodies remained at home, still unburied. I was heart-broken and knew not what to do.

At this juncture I met some of my own clansmen who had assumed the rôle of beggars. From them I learned that my parents' corpses had not yet been placed in coffins; that my uncle and my cousins had fled; that the wife of another relative had been taken captive; that

my aunt was at home blind in both eyes; and that it would not be safe to go home.

I thereupon begged from them a woman's torn garment, which I put on, pushing the red silk of my queue inside my collar. Then, with some ash-coloured earth I rubbed my face, neck, and shoes, and clasping a cracked alms-bowl under my arm, I too acted the part of a beggar. After having escaped detection, I came within sight of my own home and saw, as it were, my aunt sitting in the doorway, when a trooper seized me by the arm, dashed my bowl into pieces and took me captive once again, before I had been able to look upon my parents' dead bodies. How could I but be pained in spirit?

8. I RUN AWAY

When we entered his quarters, my captor ordered me not to beg. He let me have a wash, and gave me food, for I was famished. He then directed me to a room where I could sleep. During the night I wept beneath the bedclothes. In the morning the headman asked why he had heard the sounds of weeping in the night? I replied that I frequently had nightmare, and wept without knowing it.

At this time the Taiping rebels were plundering the rice-fields, and I was set to watch the grain lest the horses should eat it. Now, although my outer garments were in rags, my brightly coloured garments and the red silk of my queue were hidden, and I wondered how I could best let my captors see me as I really was. The scheme I hit upon was to begin conversing with the men about the affairs of the rebellion. When they asked me what I knew about it, I replied that I was one of their young boys; how should I not know? I said that I had

been left on the road because my feet were sore, and could not follow, and to prove my word I took off my tattered garments and showed them my real clothes.

But every night I wept beneath my bedding.

One day I suddenly met my elder cousin's wife hulling rice for the troops, and from her I learned that my aunt was almost starved to death. So I took the opportunity when it presented itself, and secreted several pints of rice within my gown, and took it to my aunt. She told me that the Imperial troops would soon arrive and then I should be able to see to my parents' corpses being placed in coffins. And so it was, for after two days the white flags appeared and the rebels fled. The road we took was on a dike, some ten feet high, which skirted the Grand Canal on one side, while on the other side were rice-fields. Pretending to slip, I rolled over into the fields, and lay prostrate among the rice. And the troops took no heed, but went their way.

9. TAKEN CAPTIVE THE FOURTH TIME

At dusk, when it was too dark to distinguish people, I crouched and stalked through the water to get farther from the dike, as the Taiping rebels were marching along the embankment. The voices of men and the stamp of horses did not cease all night, and it was not until after the fifth watch that it began to be quiet. At daylight I peered into the village, and as the red flag was flying everywhere I knew that the rebels were stationed there again; so I did not dare to enter.

At this juncture troops entered the rice-fields to cut rice. In my fear I fell prostrate, then crawled on hands and knees till I reached a footpath. Here I encountered an old woman, a fellow-clanswoman, who had left the

village to beg. She told me that the rebels were in greater numbers than ever. Being extremely hungry I asked her if she had any food, whereupon she gave me a handful of raw broad-beans. I munched several of these, but they were too rank to swallow. Nevertheless, my eyes were enlightened.

While I was trying to concoct some plan of escape I met a trooper who stripped me of all but a pair of unlined trousers, so that what with desperate hunger and cold I longed for death. I thereupon decided to go home, and after wailing before my parents' corpses, to seek death recklessly. But I had no sooner reached home than I was arrested by a trooper who took me to his quarters. Here he gave me clothing and told me to help myself to food, which I did with avidity. He also urged me not to be frightened, or mournful, or to think too much about my home. The leader of that company asked me if I could write. I said yes, but not well. Nonetheless, he called my writing good, and said that when he needed me he would let me know.

10. I NARROWLY ESCAPE DEATH

It was not long after this that the rebels broke camp, and retired upon hearing that the White Banners had arrived. We crossed the Grand Canal, taking captives by the way, also reaping the crops and hulling the grain. They also seized two young women to mend their clothes. Each day the whole company went forth to plunder and take captives; and lest any of their captives should escape, they securely nailed up the back doors of the building, and set me to watch the front door.

One day, when they returned, of those who had been left to hull the rice not one was to be found. The doors

were still securely nailed, and the walls were all complete. In great wrath the leader of the company sat in judgment on the matter, saying: "Unless they have been intentionally set at liberty, they must have escaped by the front door. For either crime there is but one punishment, namely, death." I replied: "Most certainly they have not been secretly liberated, nor have they left by the front door." Though my words were true, the chief would not listen to them, for he was determined that I should be killed.

Among the troopers was one who said: "Young women take their ease; if the two women have not escaped they should be interrogated." But though they were sought for, they could not be found. But upstairs, just below the ridge-pole, an aperture was discovered just large enough for a person to pass through, and a trooper who climbed through discovered the two young women secreted next door. When they were questioned they confessed that they had endeavoured to escape. They were therefore hung up by their wrists, with their feet off the floor, and were told that they would be killed that night.

Up to this time I had never struck anyone, but because by reason of these women my life had been endangered, I vented my wrath upon them by striking them in the face with a strip of bamboo. Shortly afterwards I scolded them soundly. They acknowledged their guilt, but pathetically said: "We are already nearly dead with this unendurable torture, we beseech you to have mercy and lower us so that our feet may touch the floor." As I was moved with compassion I did so, but a few hours later they decamped. I immediately raised the alarm. One of them was never found, but the other one was caught next door. She was bound and slain that night.

II. THE FINDING OF GOLD

Shortly afterwards the troop moved to another village. One day, when they had all gone off to loot and take captives, I happened to pick up a stick, and began poking some ashes. Suddenly I alighted upon a concealed parcel. It was a reticule in which were hidden a woman's head-ornaments. As I was gazing at the contents, I was suddenly moved to say: "Although there is much gold here, why think about that since you do not know where your corpse will fall?" Involuntarily my hands dropped, and the reticule fell to the ground. Gathering up the contents, and wrapping them up, I placed the reticule in the ashes once again, and then swept more rubbish over them, that they might not attract attention.

12. TERROR FROM FLYING SHOT

During the winter of 1864 the rebels were engaged in plunder and in the taking of captives every day, until they reached the city of Changchow. At this time the Imperial troops drew near, and the report spread that foreign gunboats were firing from their masts. The noise of cannon was constant, and one could frequently see the shot and shell strike. I was not a little frightened, for the leader of my troop and his brother, who were under the command of King Tze, were plundering on their own account. Unexpectedly, King Tze's army issued from the city to join battle with the Imperial troops without, and happened to encounter these two men engaged in their irregular proceedings. These they reported on their return to the city, and forthwith these two men and I were summoned to appear before the

Commander-in-Chief. It was decided that the two men should suffer the death penalty, but I was not tried. Through the intercession of the Commander-in-Chief's mother-in-law the death penalty was commuted to degradation from office, but I lost my privileged position and was left with nothing to do.

Gradually the city was more closely beleaguered by the Imperialists, and the two Kings, Hu and Tze, commanded the city gates to be blocked, and all persons over sixty and below sixteen to be expelled, so as to economise food. That I might escape expulsion I was hidden among the horse provender. Most of those driven forth were starved to death, and I saw no little suffering with my own eyes.

Subsequently, I was appointed to beat the watch; five persons being appointed to this duty in routine. Every night the Imperialists did great damage to the city with their artillery. One evening, after having beaten the third watch, I went upstairs to lie down, when a ball crashed through the roof and came to rest at my bedside. But I slept so soundly that I was unconscious until in the morning I saw the hole in the roof. The cannon-ball was as large as a tea-cup. On another occasion a rifle-shot ploughed up the ground at my feet. It was dreadful! On another occasion, when I was leaning up against the front door, a bullet struck the panel close to my throat. I got a great fright. All through the winter, until the spring, the Imperialists continued their attack, both by day and by night.

13. SAVED BY STOPPING A HORSE

One night, in the spring of 1865, all firing suddenly ceased and silence reigned. Early in the morning, the

troops on guard reported with great joy that the Imperialists, unable to take the city, were placing all their artillery on boats prior to withdrawal. Some drank, some smoked opium, but personally I felt distressed. Suddenly firing recommenced, and shot and bullets fell throughout the city. A great outcry arose, and the message came that the Imperialists were using floating bridges to cross the canal.

I immediately took out the clothes I had secreted and changed into them. The Imperialists were already on the city wall, while the rebels were seeking to escape. Being hungry I entered the kitchen determined to take some food. When I was in the yard, I heard the shriek of a shell and looking up I saw it fall to the ground in front of me, in shape like a water-melon. Knowing that it was a "Plum blossom," *i.e.* a bomb from a mortar [literally, a water-melon gun], I was afraid and dashed away. I had barely reached the gate of the courtyard ere it burst with a report that shook the earth. Broken tiles and splinters of stone struck me on back and shoulders, and looking round I saw the house in ruins.

I had already arranged with the old woman who mended the clothes of the troops, that if the Imperialists took the city she would shave my head.¹ But it was now too late for there were several other men waiting their turn, so I made for shelter near at hand. The doors, window-frames, and woodwork of all the empty houses had been taken for firing, while the bricks had been powdered and boiled to extract saltpetre. For this

¹ The Taiping rebels are called by the Chinese *Ch'ang-mao* or "Long Haired," as they did not shave the front and back of the head, which was a sign of subjection to the Manchus. The queue was only grown from the crown of the head. The shaven or unshaven head was a clear sign of party. While the head could be easily shaved, the hair could not be as easily grown, so to be a turn-coat was not always possible.

reason there was little cover. I could see companies of the rebels crouching among the ruins while I was all alone. And I could see the Imperialists advancing with their guns shooting every person they met. There was no way of escape [literally "no road to heaven, and no door into the earth"]. My heart was alarmed, and my courage broken. As I interrogated myself, the only answer I received was one of certain death.

Suddenly a horse, without saddle or bridle, galloped past the house, with an Imperialist soldier in pursuit. I stretched out my hands, and stopped the animal, and the soldier, seizing the horse, laughing, said, "Good! is there a saddle?" I told him there was, and led him into the garden and showed him where he could find the needed equipment. He said to me: "You're a good lad; I will deliver you out of the city." Mounting the horse, he ordered me to clutch the horse's tail, and follow him.

14. TWO ESCAPES FROM PERIL

We found the city gate closed and blocked with earth, but there were several breaches in the wall itself. Here there were numerous dead rebels. When the soldier who had saved me passed through the wall I saw two foreigners in charge of two mounted guns. I was jostled, and was delayed in getting through. When I reached the canal, I saw the man who had saved me crossing the canal on horseback. I also saw that there was no chance of my crossing by the floating bridge, which was so crowded with horse and men that some were thrust into the water. So I stripped, and jumped into the canal, and tried to swim across. But though the canal was not wide, I sank in the middle. Confused and giddy, just when I saw no hope of life, I felt my toes touch the

bottom. Exerting all my remaining strength I reached the side and climbed the bank.

From afar I saw my saviour riding on his horse, but Imperialist soldiers with swords and foreign guns were guarding the way, and killing all who sought to pass. Hurrying forward I saw a soldier raise his long two-handed sword to kill a man. As he did so I slipped under his arm and passed on. He turned to pursue me, but, as another man pressed forward, he left me to seize him. This unfortunate man piteously pleaded: "I am an inhabitant of Kintan, spare my life." But the soldier replied: "My orders are to kill all rebels without exception." I implored the man who had saved me to succour this man from Kintan, but before he could do anything the man's head had been severed from his body.

My saviour then said to me: "The road in front is still well guarded, it will be difficult for you to get through." Then taking some Huchow crape from a bundle he disguised my appearance, and having warned me not to show my long hair, he told me to grasp his horse's tail and follow. We then traversed two important passes guarded by soldiers who were killing all they saw with long hair, even pursuing them with spears into pools and ponds. That I was not slain was infinite good fortune.

15. I AM LEFT IN CAMP

When we had reached camp the man who had saved me clad me in his own clothes and hid me in his tent. But at dusk a decree was promulgated stating that all rebels from Kiangsu, Anhwei, and Kiangsi would be exempt from the death penalty and might return home, but those who came from Kwangtung and Kwangsi, whether man or woman, old or young, would all be

executed. Then for the first time I was at peace, and my saviour shaved my head.

The next morning I told my benefactor that my home being near I desired to return, but he replied that I ought to be willing to serve him several years in return for my life being saved. I stayed for several days, but when the company was about to break camp, and attack Tanyang, I seized the opportunity and departed.

16. I ENCOUNTER DANGER

When I reached the market town of Peh-kia-k'iao I saw a rice-shop, and being hungry desired food. But at the same time I caught sight of three undesirable men who followed me into the restaurant. Ordering a basin of rice for myself, I also with a loud voice ordered one for each of the three men. This order I repeated, and after paying for the eight basins had little money left. The men laughed, and asked me where I lived. I answered by naming a place not far from my home. One of them replied: "That is good, for we are almost neighbours," and then offered to escort me on my way. This turned out for my good, for we passed several groups of ne'er-do-wells who eyed me suspiciously. My escort then told me: "You can now go in peace, but if we had not accompanied you, you would have been scalped, skinned, and eaten." I then learned that the people were without food, and were on the look-out for escaping rebels who were better off. To strip a man of his clothes and belongings was called, "scalping"; to fleece him on account of hunger was termed, "eating him hair and all." When I heard this I rejoiced with trembling. Six basins of rice had secured me immeasurable relief! What could be more fortunate! So I returned laughing for very joy.

17. STILL SICK

After I had entered my native village my relatives all saluted me and told me in full detail all about my parents' decease; how they had grieved for me; how they died in the eighth month; and were now buried. I fell to the ground and wept for sorrow. When I recovered I decided to go to the village temple and become a Buddhist priest. But all my relatives strongly opposed this, quoting the saying of Mencius: "There are three ways of being unfilial; and of these to be without posterity is the worst." They further added: "If you become a priest the Clan will be extirpated by you. How then can you fulfil your Clan responsibilities?" So that idea was quashed.

Now because my brother-clansmen, Ren and Meo, were near kinsmen, they managed our affairs, and they received me into their family. I resolved to attend the grave for twenty-seven months, and to wear mourning for fifty-four months [lunar months].

18. MY FOSTER-MOTHER

In the autumn of 1866 I left Soochow to stay with my foster-mother, who had frequently invited me. Having been born to my parents late in life, they were anxious lest I should not live; so following a common custom they handed me over to another Clan while still a babe in arms. My foster-mother, Mrs Shih, loved me much, as the following facts prove.

When a son is just a month old, at the ceremony of shaving the hair, the mother carries the babe on her left arm, and with the right hand squeezes a lungan,¹

¹ The fruit of the *Nephelium Longanum*, a tree, related to the Li-chi, cultivated in the East.—Ed.

from which the skin has been peeled off, so that the child partakes of the juice along with its mother's milk. This is to quiet its weeping.

When I had been four or five years of age, and did not understand the reasons for the ceremony, I had accidentally knocked my foster-mother's right hand. The result was that the fruit itself fell into the baby's mouth, her first-born son, and before it could be extracted the babe had swallowed it. The next day the babe died, but my foster-mother suppressed the real cause of its death, so great was her love for me. And now she had invited me to come and see her. I had waited until I had fulfilled the twenty-seven months before I left the "family garden" for the first time, but now I went. And I hold it in grateful remembrance that my foster-mother treated me just as in former days.

19. I AM DEEPLY GRIEVED

In 1867, on Chinese New Year's Day, my foster-father gave me, and his own three sons as well, new suits of clothes with red silk for our queues, this being the custom of the times. But I had for long made up my mind to wear mourning twenty-seven months for each of my parents, and the appointed fifty-four months were not yet complete. As my foster-father was resolute, I adopted my foster-mother's compromise, and only changed the silk in my queue without changing my clothes. But I was not happy, and bought fresh white silk for my queue. To wear mourning at the New Year was in my foster-father's eyes most unpropitious, and he had constant squabbles with my foster-mother about it.

Whenever I decided to leave, my foster-mother wept,

saying, "You must not leave before you have attended to my obsequies." I therefore dismissed the thought of going. But all unexpectedly she sickened and died. I desired to return home before the funeral [which in China is frequently long delayed], but I found my purse would not allow me to do so, and I knew my foster-father would be loath to make me a loan. I then conceived the plan of pawning two of his brass candlesticks, giving a receipt for the same to his third son to hand to his father. But on further consideration I recognised that this was tantamount to stealing. Why should I be as impatient as a spark? It would be better to go to Ru Sien's home, spend the night there, and on the morrow borrow what was necessary for the journey. Forthwith I left without saying farewell.

20. I TRY TO BE A PEDLAR

This Ru Sien was a Clan nephew, and had for many years controlled the public granary at Wuhsien, but I saw that he supported his family by being a pedlar. I thought that by adopting a similar means of livelihood I should be able to fulfil my filial vows, and said so to him. He told me that after the ravages of the rebellion this was the only way left to him to earn a living, but he said: "Your family possess fields and houses, why undertake this bitter course?" I thereupon explained to him in detail the vow that I had taken when I was fleeing from calamity. His reply was: "That being so, have a try."

The next day he provided me with half a hundred-weight of sweet potatoes. These I hawked up and down the streets and lanes on my back, but sold only a few tens of cash worth all day. "Well," said Ru Sien in the

evening, "how did you get on?" I laughed and replied: "When, in my native village, I became a beggar for half an hour, my beggar's clack-dish was taken from me, and broken to bits; to-day, in Soochow, I have peddled for ten or twelve hours to little profit. I will return your goods," and with a smile I handed him back his potatoes.

I then sought to labour in the yard of a neighbour opposite, a Mr. Liu, being willing to do anything, even to scouring the rice, washing the vegetables, taking the workmen their food, making purchases, or any service appointed me. I had come empty-handed, but by the painful toil of several months I was able to purchase bedding, clothing, and shoes. I then returned to my native place, but as my elder clansmen, Ren and Meo, had together swallowed up my patrimony, and we were in consequence at cross purposes, I again left Soochow.

21. I GET DRUNK

Early in 1868 I came to blows with my employer, Mr. Liu, and thereupon strolled into the Hsüen-miao-kwan, a well-known temple in Soochow, whither many go to throw off the cares and toils of life. In the afternoon I left the temple, and passed down the Ch'ang-men main street, and entered a restaurant near the Tu-t'ing bridge to drive away care with a little drink. Before I was aware of it I was the worse for liquor, and when leaning against the balustrade of the window noticed a boat designated for the North Gate, Shanghai. This reminded me that my father had lent money to a certain Mr. Sieh, who kept a wine establishment at Shanghai, opposite to the Green Leaf Tea-shop.

Being without employment, I resolved to seek repayment of this loan, and emptying my purse upon the

table I told the waiter to take the money and pay my bill. This left me with only four cash, but I picked these up and went on board, and being so much under the influence of wine I sank to sleep upon a fellow-traveller's bedding. When I awoke, my fellow-traveller, upon who's bedding I had slept, said: "Are you not drunk?" I told him that I was, but he permitted me to share his coverlet.

Next day at noon another traveller, named Yüen, asked me my name and business. I told him. He then warned me of the foul ways and deceptive customs of Shanghai, and that I, being young and inexperienced, might fall in with evil men and become a *Liu-hai*, a Shanghai son of Belial. He offered me his assistance, but as I was then a resident in the City of Grief I was sick at heart at his loquacity, and met his advances with a cold silence.

After travelling for two days we reached the Shanghai new North Gate, and all the passengers left. Mr. Yüen urged me to accompany him, and when it became evident that I had no money he accepted responsibility for my fare. Being an accountant in the Soochow furniture business, and constantly travelling, he was well known to the boatmen.

I accompanied Mr. Yüen, and after some refreshments and worshipping in the City Temple, we reached the Green Leaf Tea-shop, but there was no wine restaurant opposite. All our inquiries failed, and my dismay was revealed on my countenance. Mr. Yüen comforted me, and told me as it was raining to stay in the tea-shop, and take some refreshments while he did his business, sought lodgings for me, and obtained a rain-coat for me. Taking me by the hand, he placed an assortment of food upon the table and left me.

As it became dark I began to be troubled, but Mr. Yüen appeared bringing a rain-coat, and took me to his cousin's home and treated me like a visitor. For ten days we searched the city in vain; but one afternoon, when taking some refreshments, the waiter overheard our conversation and told us that the man we sought was now resident in the town of Liuho, as Chief in the Office for Transit Duties. We were greatly rejoiced. The next day, as Liuho was nearly twenty miles away, Mr. Yüen gave me a thousand cash and asked his cousin to escort me there. He returned to Soochow by the night boat.

22. I HEAR ABOUT OLD FRIENDS

On the morrow, with the thousand cash bound round my waist and escorted by the cousin, I arrived at Sinchah, and hearing that the remainder of the way was as straight as a penholder I persuaded my escort to return while I went on alone. But when I had gone half-way, what with the rain making the embankment slippery, and the weight of the money, I had no strength left and fell repeatedly. While in this plight I met another traveller who commiserated me, and offered to find lodgings for me in his maternal cousin's home. He told me to take hold of the bag hanging from his shoulders, and walk leaning on him. As he bore the greater part of my weight I was kept from slipping. At his maternal cousin's house they gave me food, and washed and dried my clothes.

The next day dawned fine, and my succourer started out for Chungming, while I continued my journey. That day I reached Liuho and met Mr. Sieh. Speaking of the Departed, he told me particularly about Mr. Ch'en who had left behind a widow and two daughters by his

secondary wife. These friends were living at Wukiao about six miles away. One daughter was betrothed, but the younger one was not. He also told me that the old lady, who was quite blind, had frequently asked for me, and he offered to escort me there. But as my days of mourning were not ended, and I was without change of raiment, I felt it would not then be becoming. He concurred, and though he made no reference to the debt, he was liberal in his ceremonial presents. After a stay of more than ten days I returned to Soochow.

23. THE HONOURABLE MAN IS INDEPENDENT

Having arrived in Soochow, I stayed with my relative Ru Sien, and in due course told Mr. Yüen all about my experiences. He was greatly pleased and said: "Heaven protects the good." He gracefully allowed me to refund the boat-fare he had paid for me, but stoutly refused to accept repayment for other expenses.

By this time the fifty-four months of mourning were ended, and I put off my mourning. Mr. Yüen invited me to go into the country to see the exhibition, and after my return to the city I saw the great Spring Festival. I then considered whether I should not go to Wukiao and take up my residence with Mrs. Ch'en. I recalled how Mr. Ch'en had been an upright official, and had died doing his duty, that his widow was blind, and that his possessions were now in the hands of his nephew. But having tasted the pleasure of life, and the honours of independence, and having a little property at home, why should I sacrifice my freedom by becoming a dependent of hers? Moreover, I knew that in consequence of the recent troubles there were many books and documents to be had for a mere song. I resolved therefore, though

I had but little wealth, to buy a few books and other things, and then return home. So I dismissed the thought of going to Wukiao from my mind. Who would have thought that my not going then to repay Mrs. Ch'en for all her kindness to me would become a life-long regret?

24. AN UNEXPECTED MEETING

One afternoon, in the spring of 1868, the wife of a clansman came to Ru Sien's home, and informed us that she had engaged herself as a servant at the Christian Chapel in Soochow, and she invited me to go and see it. I replied: "I have already spent ten days roaming about the foreign settlement of Shanghai and know all about it." But eventually I went with her. The front door was on Shih-ts'üen Street [Perfect Street], adjoining the Tai-p'ing-side Street [Peace Street]. Although the servants used the back door on the side-street, as the front door was open we entered there. Inside, the western pastor, Mr. Henry Cordon¹ was sitting in the hall, or chapel, and at once rose and invited me to take a seat. I accordingly did so. As Mr. Cordon was studying Nankinese, with which I was conversant, we fell into a conversation, and he caused me to read several verses from one of the gospels in Nankinese to test my pronunciation. He also asked me if I could write, to which I replied by saying: "I am only a poor scribe."

¹ Mr. Cordon, who was one of the C.I.M. early pioneers, with Mr. Meadow's assistance secured premises in Soochow in March 1868. At the time of this meeting with young Mr. Ren, Mr. Cordon was a young and inexperienced worker. He and Mrs. Cordon only arrived in Shanghai as new workers on December 14, 1867, after a voyage lasting one hundred and thirty-four days. Pastor Ren's saying that he wanted to *test* his pronunciation is an illustration of Chinese courtesy. Mr. and Mrs. Cordon are still living—June 1930.—Ed.

Mr. Cordon then retired but returned with his wife, with whom he conversed for a time in their western speech. When his wife had withdrawn he said to me: "I desire to have you as my friend, and I invite you to assist me to learn Nankingese, and to write letters for me. My Nanking teacher, Mr. Chang, whom I have engaged, will be absent for two or three weeks, or possibly for a month. If you will remain until his return, you can then suit your own convenience as to whether you stay or leave." As it was at most only a matter of a short period I agreed to his proposal. He thereupon went inside and returned bringing out a satin hat which he placed on my head. It fitted me exactly. Smiling, he said: "A mere trifle of a present!" I accepted it, and promised to come on the morrow, and asking him to convey a message to my clanswoman, I took up the hat-box and returned home.

25. I CAST LOTS

At the evening meal I told Ru Sien what I had done. He was alarmed and urged me to repudiate the agreement. His wife being deaf he shouted the news to her, and she informed the neighbours, with the result that the old and young of both sexes crowded in to ask for information and to raise objections. "In the first place," said one, "this religion does not allow ancestral worship." "And in the second place," said another, "they scoop out the eyes, the heart, and the liver of their pupils. They are a menace to life. What bitterness for you!" I was greatly distressed and perplexed.

That night I could not sleep, and gave profound thought to my position. What should I do? Should I repudiate the agreement? But I had not accepted the

hat for nothing! I reproached myself for my want of decision. I thought of engaging someone to return the hat for me. But I had seen Mr. Cordon face to face and made the agreement personally. How could I return the hat when I had accepted it from his own hand? Moreover, by returning the hat in person, should I not expose myself to the possibility of Mr. Cordon asking me if I was not fickle [literally, yesterday, Yes! to-day, No!]? Could I make a full disclosure of what was reported about the scooping out of eyes, hearts, and liver? And if I did, what should I say if he asked for evidence?

These questions I revolved over and over without any solution. Suddenly I remembered that the Goddess of Mercy was very powerful, and that formerly I had worshipped her for some months. Now that I was in a quandary, why should I not seek guidance from her?

Having made up my mind I arose at dawn, and having washed I started. Ru Sien said to me: "If you are going to the Christian chapel why start so early?" I told him I was not going; pushed past him, and set off for the temple. Lighting both incense and candles I prostrated myself before the Goddess of Mercy, and said in all sincerity: "If it will be good for me to go to the home of the westerner, graciously grant me the Upper Lot; but if not, give me the Lower one." Seizing the bamboo container I shook it, and lo! out fell the Upper Lot. When the Buddhist priest handed me the verse which corresponded with the lot, I gave him a handful of money, and laughing for very joy returned home. I explained to Ru Sien what I had done, and gave him the Lot verse to read. After he had read it, he became very thoughtful but said nothing. As for myself I sent my baggage to the Christian chapel.

26. SATAN DESPOILS ME

Every morning, from this time on, I read the Gospel in Nankingese with the Reverend Mr. Cordon, and sometimes wrote letters for him in the afternoon. But after six or seven days, the convert whom Mr. Cordon had engaged from Nanking, the courtly Mr. Chang Sheo-ki, arrived. Already some of the neighbours had advised me not to stay, and had spoken as freely of the dangers of doing so as the good folk in Ru Sien's home. For this reason I now gave notice to leave, but Mr. Cordon gave me a copy of the New Testament, and exhorted me to remain and study it. I followed his advice, but the Gospel according to Matthew did not commend itself to my taste.

At the Mission House was a teacher in the Elementary Girls' School, a Mr. Ts'ien, who advised me not to read the book, saying that in the days of the Emperor Tao Kwang [A.D. 1821-1851] those who read it were arrested by the police. Hearing this I at once placed the book on a high shelf [*i.e.* dismissed it from my mind], and determined to leave on the morrow. But that night Mr. Chang, at evening worship read about the creation, and the origin of man from Mrs. McCartee's *Old Testament History*. This recalled something I had heard the previous year from a colporteur, and my heart was moved by it, so that my resolve to leave unconsciously vanished.

The next evening the venerable Mrs. Hudson Taylor from Yangchow, without my knowing it, noticed how I strove to listen during the preaching, how I changed colour during the singing, and how I slipped out during the prayer. Speaking privately to Mrs. Cordon, as I learned afterwards, she said: "This youth is not like a church member." From Mrs. Cordon she learned my

story. From this time I listened regularly to the preaching and gradually came, as it were, into the land of the sugar-cane [*i.e.* came to enjoy the sweetness of it]. Further, Mr. and Mrs. Cordon treated me so courteously that my resolve to leave was postponed.

27. I JOIN A BOOK-READING FRATERNITY

Not long after this Mr. Pao Cheh-ts'ai, a Chinese pastor in the American Presbyterian Mission North, with a Mr. Cheo Siao-shan, an elder, and a Mr. T'ang Chih-chong, a theological student, established a book-reading fraternity, and asked me to join. At first I declined, saying I was not a co-religionist and was not educated. But gradually I yielded to Mr. Pao's persuasion. The book they were reading was *T'ien-lu chih-nan*, "A Guide to Heaven" [literally, "The Compass of the Road to Heaven"].

Speaking generally, we met on Friday afternoon, and as we read, Mr. Pao explained. The first topic was repentance, and this subject entered deeply into my heart, so much so that I took down my New Testament from the high shelf and compared it with what we were reading. From that day I never dared lightly to regard the Gospel. My original promise had been to attend but once, but now I came of my own accord. When we read about the doctrine of faith, it gripped my heart, and when we came to read about prayer, I was more deeply moved still. Returning to my private room, several times I desired to kneel in prayer, but my stubborn disposition had not yielded, and I was not willing to so much as bend my knees.

28. I BEGIN TO HAVE AUDIENCE WITH GOD

One day, when Mr. and Mrs. Cordon were out and I was reading in the hall, a letter containing a money-order arrived. The man who handed in the letter knew that I had previously cashed money-orders for Mr. Cordon, so he did not hesitate to entrust it to me. When I had finished reading, I slipped the letter inside my book which I then placed under my arm. When I entered the house I laid the book on a small table, and thought no more about it. When Mr. Cordon returned, he asked me if a letter had come, and I said "Yes"; but upon opening the book there was no letter to be found.

Being much alarmed, I recalled my various movements, and remembering that I had not been abroad that day, I lit a lamp and began to search diligently. Mr. Cordon said: "If you search leisurely it will turn up." But though I sought it high and low, I could find no trace of it. At length I said to myself: "The night is already far gone, nothing will be gained by losing one's sleep." I therefore lay down, but being sick at heart could not rest. I thought of various ways of offering to indemnify Mr. Cordon for the loss. Personally I had no money, but should I ask my Clan to become guarantee? But even that might arouse suspicion, and though I had a clean conscience I could not produce that for people to see. Only Heaven could disclose the truth. Thereupon I arose, and kneeling by my bed I prayed that God would make the matter plain that I might not blush before men. Thereupon, enlightened by God, I resolved that if I did not find the letter before daybreak, I would ask Mr. Cordon to accompany me to the bank to ascertain whether the money-order had been cashed or not. If it had been cashed, to ask them who had done so.

Was it I? If it had not been cashed, to stop payment, etc. Immediately my heart was at rest, and I fell into a deep, sweet sleep, and knew nothing until I was awakened by Mr. Cordon knocking at my door.

As the sun was already high in the heavens, I feared I had delayed matters, but Mr. Cordon simply smiled and said: "In future be careful to hand me the letters!" He then asked me to cash the money-order after breakfast! The letter had been found on the floor in the hall, evidently having dropped as I put the book under my arm.

After this I began to pray regularly, and to study my Bible with zeal. And now Mr. Cordon engaged me for a year to attend to his business, and gave me three dollars a month for food. Henceforth, without distinguishing between the smooth and rough, I did my task with all my heart and strength. And for this reason Mrs. Cordon took care of me in a most generous fashion.

There was in the city a Mr. Schmidt, connected with the American Presbyterian Mission North, with whom I used to have converse and confidential talks, and found a congenial friend. He had been an officer under General Gordon, who had been deputed by the British Government to assist in the overthrow of the Taiping rebels. Mr. Schmidt was a German, and acted as mandarin interpreter. General Gordon was called *The People's Living-Buddha*.

During the winter Mr. Cordon examined me as to my faith, and promised to baptise me in the spring of the following year.

29. THROWING DICE I KNOW SIN

Early in 1869, during the New Year festivities, I strolled out at dusk to a neighbour's home where I

found a few friends playing at senior wrangler's hazard. This is a popular game at New Year time, and though the stake is very small, since it is played with dice, it is tantamount to gambling. I was invited to join, and in a moment of excitement I took the dice and for a joke threw it once. Immediately I was distressed, for I realised that this did not differ from gambling, and gambling was not in keeping with the Gospel. I sat down dazed and did not throw again. My peace was gone. Having broken the Commandments how could I be baptised?

As the time for baptism drew near I asked Mr. Cordon: "Do you not purpose baptising me in the third month?" He answered: "Certainly." I said: "You must not." He asked me: "Why?" I told him the circumstances. Mr. Cordon then said: "That game does not differ from gambling, and although you only threw once there is a passage in Scripture which says: 'Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all.' It will be better for you to wait another three months." My heart then began to be at peace again.

30. I ENCOUNTER TEMPTATION

About this time the teacher of the Girls' School accepted another post, and I recommended a friend named Mr. Shen to succeed him. Mr. Shen had formerly been an accountant in a drug establishment outside the Ch'ang Gate, but on account of sickness had relinquished that work in favour of teaching. He was, however, asked by the proprietor of the drug store to recommend an apprentice who would ultimately become responsible for making contracts for goods from Szechwan, Kwangtung,

and Kwangsi, and he recommended me. As a pledge of good faith a deposit of one hundred dollars was asked, and three thousand cash a month for board. I was to be at liberty to attend worship, and if I proved suitable, payment for board would cease at the end of the first year. But I was not moved by the proposal.

A little later a more tempting offer was made. The deposit of one hundred dollars was not to be demanded, and the prospects of wealth were put before me. But I was uninfluenced. Still more tempting prospects were proposed; there was to be no charge for board, and when I travelled to Szechwan or the south I was to be independent. The stipend was to be liberal, and with bonuses I was to be able to make not less than a thousand dollars a year. Now I began to yield, and I said: "Wait until I have given Mr. Cordon notice to leave." At once I arose and went upstairs.

The serving-woman, meeting me half-way up the stairs, asked me what my business was. I told her, and she said: "Man should not be ungrateful, and you have been well treated by Mr. Cordon." I dropped my head, as a man who scoops up water to drink. I stood unable to move a foot. I knew my conduct towards Mr. Cordon was unworthy, and that I ought to turn the proposal down. So I returned at once, thanked Mr. Shen and the others, and declined.

In consequence of this I felt myself unworthy to be baptised. What is the man worth who is moved by the thought of emoluments? Such persons ought to be ashamed of themselves. And it troubled me, because I knew that in maintaining the faith there could not but be difficulties, and even dangers.

The time for baptism came round all too quickly, and I shrank much from it. I desired to tell Mr. Cordon

what was in my heart, but I felt ashamed to do so, and found it difficult to broach the subject. But fortunately Mr. and Mrs. Cordon went away suddenly without mentioning the matter of baptism. Handing me the keys of all the rooms, both upstairs and down, and making me responsible for everything, they left for Shanghai.

31. TEMPTED A SECOND TIME

At this time Mr. Hudson Taylor, the Founder of the China Inland Mission, lived at Yangchow. After their return from Shanghai, Mr. and Mrs. Cordon, during the eighth moon, went to Yangchow for consultation with Mr. Taylor. As I accompanied them I met Mr. Taylor for the first time.

A few days after our return to Soochow, Mr. Shen invited me to dinner, when his wife said she had a very important matter about which she wanted to speak with me. She then told me that a well-to-do neighbour had a daughter of twenty years who was still unbetrothed, and her mother being dead, her father had asked them to select a son-in-law. As they thought I was a suitable mate, they purposed letting me see her, and if I were satisfied they would act as go-betweens.

When this maiden passed in front of the house I was allowed to see her from a distance, but I said: "In ancient times the men married when they were thirty, and the women when they were twenty. This maiden has already reached this age, but I am scarcely eighteen, so it is much too early for me. Moreover, there is not a spark of evidence of my stability or fitness for life, why then speak about marriage? It is not right to wrong oneself and another for life. Please say no more about it." Thus was I tempted the second time.

32. I SHUN THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES

Prior to this, I had several times met a Mr. Li Sze-teh, a member of the London Missionary Society at Hankow. He frequently visited Soochow, and this year he came with a Mr. Ts'ao Tze-shih who was a convert of the Methodist Episcopal Mission. He was conversant with western learning, having been in America since he was twelve years of age. He was now twenty-four. But as money was scarce in the United States, in consequence of the civil war, he had returned to China, and had come to Soochow hoping to open a school for the study of English.

Being a stranger to the place, he asked me to rent a house for him, and to help him secure scholars. In consequence a strong bond of friendship was formed between us, and I attended his evening classes. One day Mr. Cordon said to me: "You are making rapid progress with English, and your pronunciation is good, but this study is dangerous." Amazed, I said: "If my progress is commendable, how can there be danger?" Mr. Cordon replied: "You might become a merchant." I answered: "But I can resolve not to enter the business world." He replied: "In business, with a knowledge of English, you could amass wealth." "But," I said, "I do not covet money." To this he replied: "With the prospect of wealth before you, it would be difficult not to be influenced." Immediately I remembered how I had been moved by the thought of riches when invited to join the drug store. This was a bigger matter, and I might be more powerfully moved, so I recognised that it was dangerous.

One day I told Mr. Ts'ao what Mr. Cordon had said. To this Mr. Ts'ao replied: "The advantages of western

learning are great, and the emoluments surprising. On my journey from America, for instance, I was offered \$200 a month by the Captain of the steamer; but I was unmoved, being desirous rather to come to Soochow, be my own master, and at the same time lay the foundations of a work for my own church. There is undoubtedly good cause to fear the deceitfulness of riches, but after all it depends upon the man's principles. There is no need for Mr. Cordon to be anxious concerning such a man as you are."

But as I listened to his words I became utterly ashamed of myself. He did not know about the offer from the drug store and how the offer of \$1000 a year had conquered my reluctance. Now if I learned English, and received such an offer as Mr. Ts'ao had had, could I be sure that I should be unmoved. Mr. Ts'ao was a man of character; but I was not. I therefore made him my pattern, and from henceforth stood well on my guard in the study of English. To have relinquished the study altogether would have been like a man ceasing to eat because he could not swallow. But I resolved to give more labour to the understanding of the Holy Scriptures, that my heart might be fully enlightened by the living and spiritual Bread of heaven. Thus being strengthened in the faith I should be strong to preach, and after baptism could return home, engage in agriculture and education, establish a happy brotherhood, coveting neither fame nor riches. Living thus an honourable life, being an example to my own village, the people would be brought, almost unconsciously, under the influence of the Christian Church. Being thus resolved, I devoted the mornings to study and the afternoons to Mr. Cordon's affairs. Alas! friends multiplied, and honourable intimates increased, so that day by day,

the afternoons were spent in long walks to various places of interest, and I did not return until after dusk.

In consequence it was not until after the evening meal and evening worship that I was able to go to school, and then only to return home late and weary, as well as annoyed that half of the day had been frittered away. This continued for a long time. How then could I hope to make progress either in education or in character? How could my vows in this way be fulfilled? It was clear that I was on the verge of a catastrophe. At that time I did not understand the importance of prayer, nor the necessity of dependence upon the Holy Spirit. So I was heavy laden, and in constant grief.

33. I RECEIVE HOLY BAPTISM

On the 15th of December 1869, I was baptised by the Rev. Henry Cordon, several Chinese representatives from the London Missionary Society, the American Presbyterian Mission, and the Methodist Episcopal Mission being present. That we all might rejoice together Mr. Cordon prepared a feast.

I rejoiced with joy unspeakable that I had been made a recipient of God's grace. And tracing the stream of my life from its beginnings, I recognised the early and fond delight of my parents in me, and their excessive kindness which had been spoiling me. But then I saw that this had been corrected and counteracted by the discipline I had received at the hands of the Taiping rebels; by the uprooting, and the dismemberment that I then received; by the battle I had had against wind and rain until I almost despaired of life. Happily the grace of God is unfathomable. The fact that I had learned Nankingese

in my youth had made me useful, and I thus escaped maltreatment.

But though the probabilities of death were as a hundred to one for life, perils had given place to safety. And such experiences were beyond number. When I had been as driftwood upon the waters I had met Mr. Yüen; and on the road I had been helped by an unknown stranger. Such remarkable events as these men attribute to the virtues of their ancestors. And I believed this too. But now I saw that they were due to the marvellous and unmerited mercy of God. And only an infinitesimal portion of God's grace can be recorded.

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good:

For His mercy endureth for ever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,

Whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."

BOOK II

THE AFFAIRS OF A CONVERT

FROM THE NINTH YEAR OF T'UNG CHIH

TO

THE SECOND YEAR OF KWANG HSÜ

1870-1877

THE AFFAIRS OF A CONVERT

I. REMOVAL TO HANGCHOW

EARLY in 1870, on the 26th of the first moon, Miss Faulding—who was subsequently married to Mr. Hudson Taylor—came to Soochow, accompanied by an old woman servant. Two days later, I accompanied them on an excursion to the Goddess of Mercy Hill, and other places. *En route*, I questioned the old attendant concerning the work at Hangchow, about the services, the schools, etc., and unconsciously revealed my interest and admiration.

I do not know whether what I said was reported to Miss Faulding or not, but just as I stepped on board, for the return journey, Miss Faulding said to me:

“Do you desire to go to Hangchow?”

I replied: “It is even so.”

Miss Faulding then said: “I return to-morrow; can you accompany me?”

I replied: “If I am able; how can it be arranged so suddenly?”

When she asked me when I could come, I was in doubt as to what to say. She then inquired:

“Can you come in a month’s time?”

In reply I said: “Probably I can.”

“What is the date to-day?” she asked.

I replied: “To-day is the 28th of the first moon.”

"Then you can start on the 28th of the second moon?" she rejoined. I nodded in assent. "Then we will fix it thus," she added, and withdrew into the cabin.

2. PASTOR CORDON'S PROMISE

When Pastor Cordon heard what had transpired, he came to my room and asked me:

"In what have I failed you?"

I replied: "In nothing."

"Then why do you wish to leave me?" he asked.

"I desire it," I replied; and then for the first time I told him of the entanglements of youth, and how I was weary of these daily excursions which were already a cause of grief. I next rehearsed to him all that had passed on the boat, and what had led up to Miss Faulding's conversation. Mr. Cordon then said:

"That you are troubled about these wasteful frivolities is good, but you should have told me, for I could have helped you."

I answered: "I have only just begun to realise it."

He continued: "Now you have made a promise, I don't want you to make another and break your word. But we must consult together about subsequent plans."

The next day, after Miss Faulding had left, Pastor Cordon said to me:

"The rent of the premises here, and all school expenses, are borne by the China Inland Mission, but I am responsible for all other charges. I much wish that we could labour together here in Soochow. It is good that you desire to return to your family's country, but you were born in Soochow, and you have grown up here. After all, Soochow is more important than your family's countryside. Though you are going to Hangchow for

two years, you must certainly return here. Let me be responsible for your board for these two years, and I will also give you two dollars a month pocket-money. In regard to your clothes, if you prefer to buy them in Hangchow let me know the cost and I will send the money, or should you wish them purchased here I will undertake that. Are you agreeable?"

I replied: "How can I fail to agree when treated with such exceptional kindness."

He answered: "Let the agreement be settled thus."

I rejoined: "Approved!"

When I reported this conversation to Mr. Ts'ao he exhorted me not to go to Hangchow and neglect the opportunities at Soochow. I said: "In two years I shall return."

He answered: "In two years' time your tongue will be intractable, and to become perfect in the pronunciation of English will be difficult." But because Mr. Cordon had said that to know the English language was fraught with danger, I regarded its acquisition lightly. So though Mr. Ts'ao urged its benefits and the unwisdom of delay I was unmoved.

3. IN DANGER FROM MEASLES

Early in the second moon, Mr. and Mrs. Cordon went to Yangchow, intending to return within a week. At that time I took measles. The fever ran very high and was accompanied with much depression and distress, but I did not know the nature of the ailment. As Mr. Hudson Taylor accompanied Mr. Cordon back to Soochow, *en route* for Shanghai, Mr. Cordon asked him to diagnose my case, Mr. Taylor being a doctor. Mr. Taylor said: "This is measles; and the suppression of the rash

is dangerous. If the rash is not out by dawn to-morrow there will be little hope."

Mr. Taylor's boat was detained all night, and medicine was prepared for me. Mr. Cordon did not close his eyes the whole night in order that he might give me the medicine every hour, and examine my skin incessantly. In the early dawn the rash came out all over my body, and the danger was averted. Thank God! If Mr. Taylor's visit had been one day later, my life would have been imperilled indeed!

4. MY AGREEMENT IS CANCELLED

When the 28th of the second moon dawned, I packed up and started on my journey. The boat was small, the passengers many, and we travelled slowly. When it anchored at the Teo-fu-san Bridge I left the boat, and going to the school in Sin-kai-lung I asked a man to hand Mr. Cordon's letter to Miss Faulding. In a little while she came out, holding the letter in her hand, and accompanied by Mr. McCarthy.

After a few formal inquiries they suddenly asked me: "Ought those who are disciples of Christ to decide everything themselves? or should they let others decide for them? or should they allow God to make the decision?" I replied: "We ought to let God decide." They both said: "Good." Then taking out Mr. Cordon's agreement they said: "This is what you two have decided, but it may not be God's will. We do not know that our lives will be spared for two or three years; how then can we determine whether it shall be spent in Hangchow or Soochow, or whether God may not send us elsewhere?"

Miss Faulding also further said: "When it was I who invited you to come, is it reasonable that another should

be responsible for your expenses? We think that this agreement should be annulled. To do so will not affect your relations with Mr. Cordon at all. Are you willing?"

Being convinced, and being resolved to obey God with my whole heart, I immediately replied: "I am willing." Thereupon I was led to Teacher Wang's room, and instructed to write to Mr. Cordon, and explain why the agreement was annulled. Miss Faulding also asked that the letter be brought to her that she might send a covering letter in English.

While I was rubbing the [Chinese] ink upon the slab, I began to worry about the loss of the monthly allowance and of my clothes by the annulling of the agreement. But when I remembered that those who trusted God ought not to be anxious for anything, I resolutely wrote the letter and asked Teacher Wang to hand it in for me.

5. TWO YEARS OF STUDY

Teacher Wang, after handing in my letter, conversed with me, saying: "Miss Faulding informs me that you have come to study the doctrine. That is what this place is for. Mr. McCarthy teaches the Old Testament; Miss Faulding teaches the New Testament; I teach Martin's *Christian Evidences and General Theology*. At present there are more than twenty scholars. Those of a low standard must be taught to read, and other easy lessons. I cannot overtake all the work, so you can assist me, and we need say nothing about the relationship of instructor and pupil." I assented and rendered help beyond the fixed curriculum. First came the study of the Holy Scriptures, and then literature. I determined that when my two years were finished I would return to my own

countryside as my small sphere of action, and there adorn the Gospel.

One day I noticed that Revelation vi. 9 told us of those who were slain because of the witness they bore. For self-improvement I asked myself: "If when I return to my own district, and have suddenly to face death for the Faith, shall I stand fast or not?"

That night I was ill-used for the Faith, and was about to be killed. I did not crouch; but seeing the sword at my throat I shut my eyes, clenched my teeth, and prepared to die. With a start I awoke, and lo, it was a dream. But I thought that because in my dream I had closed my eyes and clenched my teeth, and awoke with a start, I had not yet reached the state of not being afraid to die.

Two days later I noted that Revelation vii. 13-14 told us of those who had passed through the great tribulation, and had obtained white raiment. Again I questioned myself: "If persecution should arise because of the Faith, in which every form of suffering has to be borne short of death, should I be steadfast?" Because of these questionings, I saw that to be faithful unto death was no easy matter.

At that time I had only read the first two chapters of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and I had not yet seen Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, or any church history.

On one Lord's Day in the sixth moon, Mr. McCarthy invited a preacher belonging to the American Presbyterian Mission North to conduct the service. This Mr. Lu Chen-yüen used the romanised Ning-po colloquial New Testament, and chose as his subject the rendering of Hebrews iii. 14, which reads: *Shih chung ru ih*, "the beginning and end as one."¹ Just then I was earnestly

¹ "To hold fast our confidence, so that the beginning and end are as one—firm and unchanged."

seeking to be established in the Faith, and this subject just met my need.

The gist of Mr. Lu's discourse was that every disciple of Christ must, in confidence, be the same at the end as at the beginning. He must not fail half-way, as the Israelites who came out of Egypt did. Those who wish to attain to this state must be united to Christ, and the passage in St. John's Gospel about the branch not being separated from the vine was used as an illustration.

That night I studied Romans viii. from verse 28 to the end of the chapter. The next day I turned to Philippians iv. 12-13, and Matthew xix. 16-26, and for the first time realised that weakness and lack of courage spring from trusting in one's own strength. The grief of the young man and the amazement of the Apostles were both from the same cause. From the words of Jesus in Matthew xix. 26, I knew that my capacity was small, so I bowed my knees, confessed my sins, gave thanks for grace, and asked for aid. From this time the heavy burden—not less than a thousand *chün*¹—with which I had been oppressed, rolled away; and I rejoiced exceedingly that I could hope to realise “the beginning and the end as one.”

To this end I laboured more diligently in the examination of the Holy Scriptures, and organised with more than twenty of my fellow-students the searching of the Scriptures daily after evening worship. On meeting passages difficult to understand, we would make a note of the place, and on Tuesday and Friday evenings, when questions might be asked, we sought an explanation from Mr. McCarthy. I also obtained permission, which pleased my fellow-students, for the study of the Chinese

¹ A *chün* is thirty catties, or roughly 40 lbs. A thousand *chün* would be nearly 18 tons.

classics and ancient literature in addition to the ordinary curriculum. For myself, I made it a rule never to go to bed until after 1 A.M. and to rise before dawn.

Towards the close of my two years of study I suddenly coughed up blood. Fortunately I was able to consult the western physician Dr. Galt, who informed me that the blood was not from the lungs, but because of the poverty of my blood there had been haemorrhage from the smaller blood-vessels. After this all my food had to be taken cold, long hours of sleep were ordered, also less brain-work, and much open-air exercise, without any dependence on medicine. I was also ordered to walk every morning, before 7 A.M., outside the Ts'ing-t'ai Gate, and along the banks of the West Lake; while on Saturday afternoons I was to take the air on the Ch'eng Huang Hills. But going to sleep late had become a habit, and this was difficult to cure. The spitting of blood was, however, speedily relieved.

During these two years my resources were very slender. I repeatedly wrote to the Elder of our Clan who managed the estate, but not a cent of the rent they received reached me. I was greatly tried. There was nothing for it but continuously to pawn my clothes, until I had pawned them all. And last of all, to meet my expenses, I pawned even my bed-coverlet for 400 cash. But, thank God, I never borrowed money from any man.

6. BREAKING NEW GROUND

Early in 1872, just two years from the date of my arrival in Hangchow, Mr. Cordon had suddenly to return to England because of the serious illness of his wife. He asked Mr. Reid, who was at Nanking, to take charge temporarily of the Mission's interests at Soochow, and

charged him to come to Hangchow and invite me to accept responsibility for the work at Soochow. As my intention was to return to my own home I did not consent to this.

At this time Miss Faulding was back in her own country, and in the course of events became Mr. Hudson Taylor's second wife.¹ That I might fulfil my desire I told Mr. McCarthy that I wished to leave, but he said to me: "You were invited to come here by Miss Faulding, so you ought to consult her by letter; when you have received her reply it will be time enough to decide." He then asked me why Mr. Reid had come to Hangchow, and what he had said to me. I replied: "Mr. Reid was very adroit, he did not say much."

In the autumn, when Mr. McCarthy returned from the Island of Puto, where he had been to escape the great heat, he told me that Miss Faulding's reply had come while he was away. His desire was to retain me to become responsible for the affairs of the Church. I said to him: "Heavy burdens I cannot bear; I have suffered from haemorrhage. I know my physical limitations; I am afraid of having to live in inns and of travelling by passenger-boats; I cannot endure physical hardships. The only thing I am equal to is to return home and work independently." Mr. McCarthy replied: "You may open a station yourself, rent a good-sized house, and I will send you an assistant and a servant so that you may not be overtaxed. The initiative and the leadership shall be with you. Perhaps later you will be equal to the heavier responsibilities, but that can be left to yourself to decide. Try for one year, and then if it does not suit you, you can return to your home." I said: "I will give

¹ Miss Faulding left China in August 1871, and was married to Mr. Hudson Taylor in November of the same year.

you my reply in three days' time; it is necessary to pray and ascertain the Lord's will before coming to a decision."

Then I prayed: "From of old Thou, O God, hast had regard to the desires of men. My scheme of returning home, not to seek notoriety or gain, but to live diligently and frugally, helping society in the common tasks of life, is known to Thee. But Mr. McCarthy wishes me to remain here, to open up new fields and scatter the good seed. I know not yet what is the Lord's will, that it may be done."

In three days' time my resolve was made. Mr. McCarthy escorted me outside the Ts'ing-t'ai Gate, and on the road guardedly inquired about my intentions. I answered: "I am willing to have a try, but I must go home first." Mr. McCarthy asked me: "For how long?" I agreed that I would not exceed a month. He then urged me to start at once, and sent a man to engage a boat, but as that boat was slow, I said I preferred a letter-boat which was much quicker.

I thereupon took passage to Soochow, and after greeting my old friends there I returned to my own countryside. Having put things in order there, and having received some rent, I departed for Soochow, allowing a few days for fellowship with my former non-Christian friends. Mr. Ts'ao exhorted me to remain in Soochow, either in connection with the China Inland Mission, or to join the Methodist Episcopal Church. I replied: "My desire is towards my own native place, but if I do accept Church responsibilities I shall not leave my own Mission." So grasping him by the hand on taking leave, I left for Hangchow.

7. APPOINTED TO OPEN HWEICHOW

As I stepped on board the boat, I discovered that the month arranged had already expired. Mr. McCarthy, thinking I had failed to fulfil my engagement with him, after waiting three days beyond the allotted time, appointed a student named Tsiang Liang-yong to proceed to Hweichow, with a Mr. Tai Ih-fu as his assistant. But just as they were about to start, to Mr. McCarthy's joy, I suddenly turned up. So, according to his original intention, he sent me to Hweichow, and Mr. Tsiang to Soochow.

"The boat is ready," he said to me, "and I think you are willing to have Mr. Tai as your assistant. When you have secured a house in Hweichow I will send you a servant." He then counted out fifteen dollars as Mr. Tai's salary for three months, and ten dollars for travelling expenses, and placed this money in my hands, with other nine dollars as three months' salary for myself, saying, as he did so: "I give you three dollars a month as your salary, for this will be sufficient for your food. So far as qualifications are concerned you should receive more than Mr. Tai, but I know you do not mind."

"No explanation is necessary," I replied, "I understand what you mean." But I received those three dollars with a sense of shame, for my great ambition had been to be independent and support myself, and that hope I still cherished.

8. IN DANGER OF DROWNING

The next day we started but made only slow progress, as we were travelling against the stream. When proceeding along that part of the river above the city of Shunan, where there are some rapids, I was standing

on the front of the boat, admiring the landscape, when suddenly we struck a rock. Being taken unawares, I was thrown into the river. So swift was the current, that in the twinkling of an eye I was carried to the stern of the boat. But the boatman in the bows had shouted out, and the man at the stern, seeing my peril, seized me with both his hands. Thus was I drawn from danger to a place of safety. But it was a hair's-breadth escape from being sunk among the rapids and from becoming food for the fishes.

9. FAILURE TO RENT A HOUSE

When we reached Shentu, about seventeen miles from our destination, we disembarked—having been cheated by the boatmen—and engaged coolies to carry our luggage while we walked. Upon reaching Hweichow we rested for three days in an inn, and then decided to sell books in the surrounding market-towns, while we sought for a house within the city. In this way we should avoid those rumours which would endanger success.

At that time the only currency in use in Hweichow was an old dollar with a fine mill,¹ and it was impossible to exchange our Mexican dollars except with the silver-smith at a nine per cent. discount. But by God's goodness, the money I had received from my farm left me sufficient, after I had redeemed the things I had had to pawn, to give hospitality, for it was essential at the beginnings of our evangelistic work in a new place to be friendly and sociable.

A few days after our arrival I took some clothes to be

¹ Up to the middle of the nineteenth century the Spanish dollar was accepted as a stable currency, but with the dislocation caused by the Taiping rebellion the Mexican dollar was adopted for international trade. But the Spanish dollar still held its place up-country.

repaired at a tailor's shop, the tailor's name being Ts'ao. His shop was opposite the Provincial Judge's Hall, which hall at that time was used for the literary examinations. This tailor invited us to lodge in rooms over his shop, the charge for the front room, with three meals a day, being only one hundred cash per diem. As this was cheaper than the inn we removed at once, but we soon found that the chimney from the cooking-range downstairs admitted smoke into our room, bringing tears to our eyes three times every day. This compelled us to seek accommodation elsewhere. But though I was not sparing in hospitality, I was unsuccessful. No sooner was it known that the deed of rental must be drawn up in a style conformable to the Christian religion, than the negotiations fell through. Then came a letter from Mr. McCarthy instructing Mr. Tai to proceed to Anking, and informing me that when I had succeeded in renting a house in Hweichow, another helper would be sent.

10. RUMOURS AND PLACARDS

Early in 1873 fresh negotiations were completed, apart from the drawing up of the deed. Upon receipt of my letter, Mr. McCarthy sent Mr. T'u as assistant, and Cheo as servant. They travelled overland and brought the deposit money. But to my astonishment, the landlord's courage failed him at the last moment, and the proceedings were abruptly cut short. Mr. T'u and the servant returned to Hangchow. I handed them the deposit money to take back with them, saying that in future such moneys should be arranged by a draft on some business house, for it was not wise to travel with large sums of money, nor was it convenient to retain such money in hand.

Two or three months later there was another house in prospect, and Mr. McCarthy sent a certain Mr. Luh over. But before the transaction was complete, evil rumours and anonymous placards appeared. The Hweichow Prefect, at a banquet, asked if it were true that a Christian was seeking to secure premises within the city. The district Mandarin, who had but lately taken office, evaded the question by saying he was ignorant of the matter. But a certain Major Hsü said that it was so, and he was deputed to investigate the matter. The next day he called, and I carefully explained to him that the Christian religion was profitable both to place and people. He seemed pleased, and said he would report this.

Mr. Luh, who was with me during the interview, heard all that Major Hsü had said. The same evening I said to Mr. Luh: "Your coming here is a great help to me, for rumours being such as they are there is a possibility of trouble. I am now well known, having been here six months, but you could easily slip away unrecognised and report to Hangchow."

Early next morning Mr. Luh packed up his belongings to go. I said to him: "What did you promise me last night? Are you going back on your word so soon?" He replied: "I shall not do any more work for the Church. Why should I risk my life for five dollars a month?" So saying he left for Hangchow.

When I was seeing him off I said: "You have seen for yourself the dangers of this place. If anything should happen while I am alone, I cannot clap [*i.e.* make a report] with one hand, and there will be no time to write. When you reach Hangchow tell Mr. McCarthy the dangers of the situation, and ask him to pray about it."

"You need not even ask this," he replied; "nor need you

write, for I shall certainly report it all." I believed him. How could I know he would not do it?

II. THE UNDERGRADUATES MAKE TROUBLE

After no great lapse of time, the aforementioned tailor invited me to go to a temple, some five miles outside the West Gate, for a ramble, informing me that in a place nearby there was a play worth seeing. Usually there were a number of students residing in the temple, some of them graduates and some undergraduates. After I had associated with them for some time, and we had dined together, the time for the examinations arrived. The tailor asked those still remaining in the temple to allow me to stop and see the play.

On the 6th day of the fifth moon, the Literary Chancellor entered the Examination Hall [which, it will be remembered was opposite the tailor's shop]. On the afternoon of the same day, a great number of the students crowded into the tailor's shop shouting: "Tailor! Without a needle you cannot *draw* thread. You have *drawn* a foreign devil in, and to-day you must bring him out." The tailor replied: "But he left the city some days ago." This no one believed, and the students rushed upstairs to search. Fearing that his goods might be destroyed the tailor followed. But when they could not find the man they sought, they demanded that the tailor should produce him, and they beat him severely. Thereupon, the tailor jumped out of the window and escaped on to his neighbour's outhouse. This made the students angry, and they flung certain domestic utensils at him. He then jumped to the ground, but in so doing injured his feet. Happily, there was a constable on duty nearby with whom he was acquainted, and he carried

the injured man on his back and hid him. The students then surged into the neighbour's house, but though they made a thorough search they had to depart without their prey.

12. I MEET WITH DANGER

The next day some soldiers from the city garrison met me and said: "Do you know about the affair of yesterday?" I was surprised at their question. They then told me of the riot, and added: "Are they not now hunting for you?" Hearing this I at once returned to the city. The tailor's son on seeing me, not daring to speak aloud, pointed the way upstairs. I went and he followed. He then confronted me, and stamping his feet twice called me "A deadly foe." I asked for the fullest information, and as to where his father was. He told me his father was in the constable's home, not as a prisoner, but for safety. Having learned the constable's address I immediately went there.

When I demanded of the constable that he should give me the names of the rioters, he was much perturbed, and said: "How dare I, a humble constable, do that, when even the Prefect would not do it?" I then sought to comfort the tailor, and asked him for the names of the guilty persons. He replied: "It is all organised by the great family Kiang Hung of this city, and it will be a profoundly difficult matter to settle."

As I often called upon Mr. Ts'ao the boot-maker, I went that evening to his shop. Pushing the door open I entered, and he, in surprise, asked me when I had returned to the city. "To-day," I replied. "Then do you know about the riot at the tailor's yesterday?" he said. "Yes," I answered, "and I have just come from an

interview with the tailor at the constable's home." He then asked me if I had dined, and as I had not, he sent his apprentice to prepare a meal. I then borrowed paper and ink, and carefully recorded everything. After supper, I heard a row outside, and someone saying, "Here he is." The boot-maker urged me to go upstairs and hide, but I replied: "As there is no back door, nor any subterranean passage, and as I cannot grow wings, there is no way of escape." Then raising my voice I said: "Open the door, and tell them that the preacher of the Gospel is here." He hesitated at first, but being urged, at length opened the door.

Despite the great crowd without, no one forced his way in, but someone asked, "Is the preacher of the Gospel there?" "Yes," I answered, "I am he." "We are ready to swallow the doctrine," someone replied. "But Christianity cannot be swallowed," I said; "faith comes by hearing. If you approve of what you hear, you conform to it, and then act upon it. That is what is called, 'becoming a convert'" [literally, receiving with both hands].

Thereupon four men were pushed into the shop, and these men said to me: "We will hear you preach; if we approve, we will swallow the doctrine, but if we disapprove, it shall go hardly with you." I replied: "But even if you approve, you cannot receive it in an off-hand way. If Christianity were not good, why should I come from such a remote place as Hangchow, which is more than two hundred miles away, to spread it?"

Then first one, and then another, began to ask questions. I took up each point in order, leaving them no ground for excuse. But those outside shouted out: "Drag him out, and beat him. He is a devil; why should we talk with a devil? He is a mere animal (a grass-eater),

a beast without ancestors; why should we intelligent men (grain-eaters), talk with a mere animal (a grass-eater)?"

"Gentlemen," said I to the four men, "just listen! Can the officials of your honourable city permit such nonsense?" "Never you mind them," they replied; "you may preach on." So I preached on for a quarter of an hour. Then someone asked Mr. Ts'ao, "Is this your shop?" "No," he answered untruthfully. "Are you an assistant here?" asked the man again. "No," said the boot-maker, "I came here for pleasure." With a shrill voice the man said sharply: "Are you not aware of what happened yesterday, at the tailor's shop, that you still allow that fellow to be here?"

Thereupon Mr. Ts'ao gave me a shove, saying, "This is not a chapel, so please leave at once." I sat tight and said, "There is nothing to fear; I am neither a thief nor a wrongdoer." He then pushed me again, but I did not move. Then the four men said to me: "You cannot do better than go. Since what you preach is not unreasonable, we shall not hurt you." Then with a loud voice they said: "This Chinese is not a foreign-devil and what he preaches is reasonable, so he must not be molested." They thereupon called upon the crowd to make way, and they escorted me through the crowd westward of the Examination Hall, for about the distance of an arrow's flight.

For a moment I had a bad time, when two men suddenly overtook me, but they proved to be two of the four, coming again to warn me to avoid the West Gate, where ill-disposed men were waiting to intercept me. Thanking God for His goodness, I passed under cover of darkness out of the small North Gate, and round to the western suburb. Here I purposed to seek a lodging for the night, but all the inns were overcrowded,

and although a friend well acquainted with the inns sought for accommodation, there was none to be had. This friend led me to an inn west of the great bridge, but after several consultations the innkeeper would only say: "All we can do is for you to share a bed with this man to-night; to-morrow we will make other arrangements." And I was obliged to fall in with this proposal.

13. URGED TO LEAVE HWEICHOW

Being seriously inconvenienced by being without my luggage, I decided next day to go into the city for money and bedding. As I approached the West Gate, I was accosted by an acquaintance who kept a shop for mounting scrolls and drawings. In a surprised manner he said: "I was coming to seek you. Do you know what happened last evening? The boot-maker's shop has been looted, and still you seek to enter the city!" I answered him: "Having neither money nor bedding, what else can I do?" He then advised me not to enter the city, saying: "Does not the proverb say, 'The wise man will not rush into danger' [literally: The wise man will not eat bitterness with his eyes open]. Hide while the examinations are on, and afterwards make your plans. Let me bring you the things you need." Then taking my hand he escorted me over the great bridge, and left me, saying: "I know the inn where you are lodging; I shall soon come; do not on any account enter the city."

That same day he brought my bedding, and handed me four hundred cash, saying to the innkeeper: "This is my friend, treat him well."

One evening, after I had gone to bed, the innkeeper woke me up and asked me, in a very low voice, what crime I had committed. He told me that four Yamen-

runners had been to ask if the preacher of Christianity was not staying there. He said he had denied it. I told him it was only another attempt to make trouble over a despised religion; that when the examinations were over I should request the magistrate to investigate the matter, but that meantime I must lie low. He, however, refused to allow me to stay, saying that his small business could not stand the racket. Though I protested, he persisted, and in the morning awoke me early. During the night I had prayed for guidance, being uncertain as to whether I ought not to await instructions from Hangchow. At length I decided, in view of the innkeeper's importunity, to leave and return to Hangchow. When I had paid my bill, I had only two cash over out of the four hundred I had received. So taking up my bedding, I went forth.

14. THE FICKLE WORLD¹

When my ticket was about to be written at the Boat office, I informed the clerk that I was unable to pay in advance, and was in fact in need of money for use by the way. The clerk, who was known to me, replied: "That does not matter—you can borrow from the boatmen and refund them when you reach Hangchow." As the boat was moored about four miles away, I again shouldered my bedding and moved on. But being very hungry, I rested under a cool kiosk where refreshments were being sold. When I inquired as to prices, I found the cheapest thing cost three cash, whereas I only had two. So though I wished to buy, I was unable, nor could I satisfy my hunger. Then for the first time did I understand the old saying: "Even (the lack of) one cash may

¹ Literally, "Hot and cold is the way of the world."

drive a hero to suicide." At the moment I was passing through such an experience.

When I reached the boat, I found that there was only rice and salted vegetables to eat, but I was loath to borrow money simply because of a lack of dainties. But beyond this I had only a quilt for bedding, without either pillow or mat; and my cotton garments had not been washed for more than ten days. In consequence I was looked down upon by my fellow-passengers, and when I preached the Gospel it was, in consequence, despised and rejected.

A certain passenger named Wu, a dealer in tea and varnish, showed me more respect. He was continually asking me to explain certain characters and phrases in the *Liao Chai*,¹ and he addressed me as Teacher [literally, first-born]. On the following evening, there was a group of four passengers who were ignorant of the two characters *Pei Hsi*,² and wanting to make sport of me, they conspired together, saying, "Let us consult this so-called Teacher!" Forthwith they appealed to me.

I said, "The characters are pronounced *Pei Hsi*." They retorted, "No, no," and asked me to give their meaning. I replied: "The tortoise-like image beneath stone monuments is called *Pei Hsi*. It is a species of sea-monster. Tradition affirms that the earth is borne upon the back of a huge turtle [like Atlas]; and that when the turtle moves the earth quakes. The turtle's strength being great, it can sustain great burdens. For this cause, the scoffer praising a man for his ability in bearing burdens calls him a *Pei Hsi*, in order to raise a laugh."

¹ The name of a famous collection of tales, by P'u Sung-ling, of the seventeenth century.

² *Pei Hsi*, a river god, endowed with herculean strength, often depicted as a tortoise supporting honorific monuments.

The four men all cried out: "That is by no means certain." But at the back of the boat were two passengers of official rank who chimed in: "Both the pronunciation and the explanation are correct." Thereupon the four persons lapsed into silence.

On the following morning, the two officials, referring to me, said before all: "You ought not to despise this man. Some may know how to pronounce these two characters without being able to explain them, but since he can do both, you may know that he is no mean student. This is the first time even we have heard both explained."

After this Mr. Wu showed me even more regard, and invited me to dine with him. I inwardly reflected upon the fact that the ancients made a man a teacher for the sake of one character, and now Mr. Wu had given me the glory of being a teacher for two characters. Was not this God's grace, that I should not for long suffer bitterness upon the boat. Moreover, Mr. Wu was glad to inquire about the truth, and after our arrival at Hangchow he came to the chapel to learn more. Alas! I do not know what finally became of him.

15. I GO TO ANCHI

It was only after reaching Hangchow that I learned that the (C.I.M.) Boys' School had been removed to Chinkiang, and the Girls' School to Shaohing. Mr. McCarthy had been transferred to Anking, and Mr. Williamson had temporarily taken charge at Hangchow. In consequence, all the letters I had written had not been received by Mr. McCarthy. After I had related to Pastors Wang and Williamson all that had happened to me, Mr. Williamson advised me to go to Anking, as

Hweichow belonged to the province of which that was the capital, and he gave me two dollars for travelling expenses.

I thereupon paid the boatmen who had brought me from Hweichow, and sent back the bedding which had been lent me; and after changing and washing my garments I set out on my journey. *En route* I spent two days at Soochow, and then proceeded to Chinkiang. At first, I stayed in the school, which was located inside the city, but the next day Mr. Hudson Taylor invited me to his home in the suburb. He also said that as Hweichow belonged to the Anhwei province, I should need to go to Anking and see Mr. McCarthy, and he appointed a Mr. Tsiang as escort.

All my old classmates in the school wished me to remain, as they said the school had deteriorated since its removal from Hangchow, but as that was then impracticable I informed Mr. Hudson Taylor of the situation by letter, and left by steamer for Anking, where I gave Mr. McCarthy a detailed statement of the Hweichow affairs. [Then follows an account of a conversation concerning Mr. Luh's flight from Hweichow.]

Mr. McCarthy's first thought was to ask the Chinese Foreign Office to look into the matter, but when he learned that the Prefect at Hweichow was the man who had previously settled Mr. Meadows' affairs at Anking, and had an understanding of international relations, he decided to send a letter direct to the Prefect himself. [Here follow details concerning a number of Chinese workers and places. Mr. McCarthy, who desired to retain Mr. Ren to help in the establishment of a Bible school at Wuhu, eventually despatched him, in company with a Mr. Chang, to find a suitable messenger for Hweichow.]

In company with Mr. Chang Shuh-liang I went to Kwangteh, but not finding the man we sought, we went on to Anchi, where we met Mr. Kao Chao-k'i. As he was willing to go to Hweichow, he forthwith started overland in company with Mr. Chang.

16. I SCATTER SEED BROADCAST

In Anchi there was a certain Mr. Moh Ru-pao, who rented the dilapidated Ancestral Hall of the Moh clan, and lived there by himself. The building had neither doors nor windows, but only plaited straw and bamboo to withstand the weather. Mr. Kao, who had experienced difficulty in finding a house, asked this Mr. Moh to sub-let part of the premises and allow him to live with him. This he did, and in consequence became an enquirer. When Mr. Kao left for Hweichow, I accepted his place and duties, and on Sundays regular worship was held in the Ancestral Hall.

But the Chief of the Bailiffs hated to hear the hymn-singing. One day, when reviling Mr. Moh, he said: "This house was rented to you, and not to the Christians. If you behave in this way, the Ancestors will be driven away. If you continue this worship and preaching, you will not be allowed to remain."

I at once saw that this would never do, so I arranged to open a school in the Ancestral Hall and instruct the young. I made no charge, and soon had ten scholars. From this time on, I visited and preached to the parents of the scholars, and thus obtained an opportunity of scattering peacefully the good seed broadcast in the city of Anchi.

17. FIRST-FRUITS AT ANCHI

In the spring of 1874 the first-fruits of work in Anchi were garnered. These were five persons in all.¹ With the exception of Moh Ru-pao, they were all parents of scholars in the school. I took these five persons to Hangchow, where after examination, they received baptism. The foundations of the work in Anchi were thus laid.

18. THE HUCHOW RIOT²

In the autumn of the same year, 1874, Pastor Wang of Hangchow appointed Messrs. Yao and Kao, with the aid of a local carpenter as middleman, to rent a house in Huchow. This house was on a side street, and was the property of the adjacent Foundling Hospital. But when the chairman of the Foundling Hospital learned what had been done, he cancelled the agreement. Pastor Wang then appointed me to deal with the matter, but when my discussions with the chairman of the Foundling Hospital proved fruitless, I returned to Hangchow and reported accordingly. I was then instructed to go to Shaohing and consult Mr. Meadows. He promised to come with me to Huchow, and he also invited Dr. Douthwaite to come as well. Pastor Wang also joined the party.

But the chairman of the hospital held aloof, and only sent his agent to beg us to withdraw. During the following day, the Sabbath, a crowd suddenly burst in and overturned the platform. Later, when the situation

¹ Their names were: Moh Ru-pao, Li Ts'ai-kwei, Liu Ch'eng-fu, the father of the Rev. Liu Teh-sen of the Presbyterian Church in Hangchow, and Ho Ch'eng-rong, husband and wife.

² The full story of this riot was published by Mr. Hudson Taylor in the last issue of *Occasional Papers*.

threatened to become serious, Mr. Meadows and I called upon the Prefect to acquaint him with the facts. He both promised assistance and instructed the district magistrate to attend to the matter. But as we were unable, on our return, even to reach the door of our premises, because of the crowd, the Prefect appointed four runners to protect us. But these men, so soon as they had secured our entry, decamped.

By this time the front door had been destroyed. The riot continued till sunset, everything in the front of the house being smashed. So far, Mr. Meadows had guarded the door of the central partition, to keep the rabble from the back. But now the rabble began to fling stones on to the roof, and Mr. and Mrs. Li, the evangelist and his wife, one or both of whom were ill with typhoid fever, cried out in their distress. I urged them not to be troubled, saying the mob would not injure the sick.

As the violence of the rioters continued to increase, Dr. Douthwaite and Pastor Wang made a hole in the back wall, through which we escaped, and crossing the river sought refuge in the yamen. By this time the local magistrate had gone to quell the riot, and the officials also provided us with two boats as a temporary shelter. But the Prefect and the district magistrate were really in league with the gentry, and so allowed matters to slide.

As the Prefect allowed four days to pass and yet took no action, Mr. Meadows instructed Pastor Wang to escort Mr. and Mrs. Li to Hangchow, while he, Dr. Douthwaite, and I proceeded to Shanghai to consult with Consul-General Medhurst.

In a little more than ten days the whole matter was settled. The house belonging to the Foundling Hospital was to be vacated and another one obtained, while the

sum of two hundred dollars was arranged as compensation for all damage done.

19. INVITED TO SINCHENG

During the winter Mr. Meadows asked me to go to Sincheng, where there was a prosperous work, and assist the evangelist and church members in Bible study. I agreed to do so. I proceeded first to Chenghsien, but not finding the accommodation there suitable, I put up at Sinchang—which was about thirteen miles away from Sincheng—and went to and fro between the two places. I also invited Mr. Yen of Chenghsien to come often to Sinchang, that we might search the Scriptures together.

20. RECALLED TO HANGCHOW

In the summer of 1875, trouble arose between the converts and people of Yühang, because the Secretary of the Treasury Office and another had compelled the converts to contribute towards the expenses of the Feast of All Souls.¹ This was to compel them to participate in the service of demons. Pastor Wang therefore invited me to return to Hangchow to deal with this matter. But before I arrived Mr. Meadows had settled it.

21. OPENING KINHWA

There was a certain convert, a native of Kinhwa, who was a shop assistant in Hangchow. This man was commissioned by Pastor Wang to seek for premises in

¹ The Chinese name is a transliteration of the Sanscrit *Ullambana*. This festival of Departed Spirits, held on the fifteenth day of the seventh moon, is often called by foreigners "All Souls' Day."

Kinhwa. During the eighth moon he found two upstairs rooms inside the city. Pastor Wang, remembering the recent trouble at Huchow, and that Mr. Williamson with Mr. Liu had been previously dispossessed in Kinhwa, asked me to deal with this business.

After the deed of rental had been successfully drawn up, I assisted evangelist Li and his family to settle in and open a preaching hall. At this time the public examinations were being held, and as Mr. Li was a man with a brusque manner calculated to provoke the students, I preached every day from morning till evening, never daring to leave the platform except for meals.

Every day a company of Taoist Vegetarians came to debate with me, and I, hoping to lead them from darkness to light, never wearied in my endeavours to help them. But one day I went to search for more suitable premises, and on my return Mr. Li said to me: "I dismissed those Taoists to-day with only a few words. They will not give any further trouble." I replied: "That was a mistake. Do you think it a clever thing to break off intercourse? Could I not have done that? But if we desire to win men, how can we act thus?"

When the examinations were over, the place became very quiet. When I left for Hangchow, for the New Year holidays, there were several inquirers,¹ so I impressed upon Mr. Li the importance of treating them well. And during the following spring Mr. Ts'u and four others were baptised.

The most surprising thing was that during that winter we mortgaged, for use as a chapel and as a residence for Mr. Henry Taylor, the very house we had formerly been compelled to relinquish.

¹ Such as Ts'u T'ien-fu and Yü Yüh-shan.

22. TWO CITIES

In January 1877 I was appointed to go to Chüchow to renew the lease of the property there, or to secure fresh premises, as Dr. Douthwaite was to be designated to that city. When this was arranged, I returned to Hangchow. But Dr. Douthwaite asked me if I would spend half my time with him, as his secretary, while I spent the other half at Hangchow. As, however, a house had just been secured at Hweichow, I went there to search for the goods I had lost in the previous riot.

Upon arrival in Hweichow, the tailor Ts'ao told me that all my clothes had been stolen. But though I knew that the students would not steal clothes, I made no further investigations, knowing that the tailor had been beaten and injured. I did not so much mind the loss of the clothes, but I was much concerned about the loss of my books and papers. This vexed me much. Sometime later Mr. Hudson Taylor, learning of my losses, gave Pastor Wang five dollars for me on this account. But from the first I had had no thought of receiving compensation from the Mission.

23. CARING FOR YENCHOW

In the eighth moon the two evangelists at Yenchow were driven out of the city, and I was appointed by Pastor Wang to see the officials and gentry about it; but though I made every effort I was stoutly opposed. I therefore went to see the Taotai.

As Yenchow was a remote city, Dr. Douthwaite at first did not favour starting work so far away, nor did he desire to accompany me to see the Taotai. But using the words of Matthew xi. 23, "And thou, Capernaum, shalt

thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades," as an argument, I asked Mr. Henry Taylor to persuade him to come, saying that we ought not to permit the door for the preaching of the Gospel in Yenchow to be closed. Thereupon Dr. Douthwaite came with me, and the Taotai promised to issue a proclamation. But Dr. Douthwaite had no intention of accepting responsibility for Yenchow, saying that if it were necessary to open a chapel there, it should be supervised from Hangchow.

24. THE NINGPO CONFERENCE

In October 1877 Mr. Hudson Taylor opened the first Conference in Ningpo, which lasted ten days.¹ All the Chinese and foreign pastors, with the teachers and evangelists of five societies working in Kiangsu and Chekiang, were present. Toward the close of the meetings the prolonged famine in Shansi and Honan was discussed, and it was decided that help should be given. I much desired to go and to do my part, but Dr. Douthwaite, on medical grounds, was strongly opposed. I therefore followed his advice and, after the conference, returned to Hangchow.

25. MY MARRIAGE

Just when I was about to be betrothed to Pastor Wang's daughter, Dr. Douthwaite urged me not to be in a hurry. He told me that his father-in-law, Mr. David Doig, was keenly interested in the Lord's work in China, but being unable to come himself, he was willing to assume responsibility for a deputy. If I would undertake to translate into Chinese the lives of notable Christians of the West, and would print and distribute the same

¹ This Conference is fully reported in *China's Millions* for February 1878, twelve pages being devoted to it.

for the benefit of preachers and Christians in China, his father-in-law would gladly bear the expense.

I replied: "I have forgotten the little English I did know. How can I undertake such work?" Dr. Douthwaite thereupon offered to teach me English himself. I therefore promised to do what he asked, and he sent my photograph to his father-in-law.

In consequence of what Dr. Douthwaite had said, I went to Pastor Wang to decline the betrothal; but after he had exhorted me four times, I yielded and was married in the eleventh month.

Mr. Doig, when he received Dr. Douthwaite's letter, was very pleased and sent me his photograph. Thus this translation work was arranged.

26. SEED-TIME IN CHANGSHAN

Towards the close of the year, in a place called Sinkeng, some five miles from Yüshan, there were some tens of Buddhists known as Quietists, among whom was Farmer Yü and others, who became obedient to the Faith. These men had been brought to Christ by Captain Yü, a convert from Kinhwa. Farmer Yü and his *confrères* were desirous of renting their Quietist Hall to the Mission for a chapel, and Dr. Douthwaite deputed me to see to the writing of the deeds, and at the same time to seek to build up these converts in the Faith. He also arranged that Captain Yü should accompany me, and sent him on ahead to engage a boat.

But when I reached the river, as I could not find Captain Yü, I was compelled to seek a boat for myself. It so happened that a boat hired by an official, named Wu, for himself and family, was just about to start, and he permitted me to take a passage in the stern of the

boat. Mr. Wu was a native of Shaohing, and was by marriage related to one of the district officials in Kiang-si. We conversed till midnight about the Gospel, which he there and then embraced, and he advised me to go to the city in Kiangsi where his brother-in-law was the mandarin (I forget the name of the city) and open a chapel.¹

Next day we arrived at Changshan and the local Transportation Company made all arrangements for landing. Mr. Wu and his family left first, having five or six sedan-chairs and several tens of bearers. I was left with a sedan-chair but without any bearers. There was nothing for it but to wait in the Company's office. I was distressed that I had not found Captain Yü, but opening up my luggage I took out a book to relieve my feelings. One of the clerks in the office asked me what I was reading, and I told him it was a Christian book, and gave him a short account of its contents. He then said: "Will you preach in our office to-night?" to which I replied, "Most gladly." He thereupon gathered a number of people together to listen. Next day I proceeded to Sinkeng, and when I had concluded my business, returned to Hangchow.

Two years later Dr. Douthwaite sent someone to Changshan to rent a house and open a chapel. As soon as the characters, CHRISTIAN CHAPEL, had been put up, a man named Hung walked into the chapel and said: "Ever since I heard the Gospel in the Transportation Offices in the winter of 1877 I have clasped that message to my heart. How delighted I am that you have come." He became the first-fruits of the Gospel in Changshan, and other members of his family were saved also. Mr.

¹ The story of Captain Yü Yuh-shan and of Farmer Yü Liang-shih is told in *The Jubilee Story of the China Inland Mission*, chapter xxi., entitled "A Chinese Pioneer."

Hung Kwei-ts'ing, the present preacher at Chüchow, is his nephew. Therefore let all who meet with disappointment know that it is God's fair appointment. We ought not to blame man.

[Then follows Psalm lxvi. *vv.* 5-20: "Come, and see the works of the Lord," with which passage of Scripture this Second Book closes.]

BOOK III

THE AFFAIRS OF A PASTOR

FROM THE SECOND YEAR OF KWANG HSÜ

TO

THE TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR OF KWANG HSÜ

1877-1899

THE AFFAIRS OF A PASTOR

I. APPOINTED TO THE PASTORAL OFFICE

In the third year of Kwang Hsü and the second month, that is, in 1877, Mr. Hudson Taylor, immediately after his arrival in China from England, came straight from Shanghai to Hangchow and exhorted me to become a pastor to, and be supported by, the Hangchow Church.¹

¹ Pastor Ren is not strictly accurate here. Mr. Hudson Taylor reached China in October 1876, took part in the General Missionary Conference in Shanghai on May 10-22, 1877, and went straight from that Conference to Hangchow. A full account of Pastor Ren's ordination is given by Mr. Hudson Taylor himself in *China's Millions* of November 1877, from which a few lines may well be quoted.

On Wednesday, June 20, Mr. Taylor invited the members of the Hangchow Church to dine with him, and told them "how, during the last few years, God had extended the work into almost every unoccupied province of China."

On Friday, June 22, he and Pastor Wang, with Evangelist Tsiang Liang-yüong, went to the city of Yühang, where Mr. Taylor suggested to the small local Church that as they had suitable premises, "they should defer the project of building a chapel, and do what they could towards the support of Liang-yüong. To this they cordially agreed, and selected two of their number to receive the funds. . . . These arrangements complete, a service was held for the purpose of definitely setting apart the Evangelist for the pastoral oversight of the flock." . . .

"Returning to Hangchow, we had similar services there on Sunday, [June] the 24th. The Evangelist Nying Ts-Kying [Nying is a local pronunciation of Ren. Ts-kying was the name he took at baptism. He took another when ordained as pastor] received and accepted the call of the Church to act as assistant pastor, on account of the frequent absence of Wong [Wang] Lae-djun. . . . An elder was at the same time set apart for the purpose of receiving the contributions of the members for this object."

"We feel sure," continues Mr. Taylor, "our friends will feel both

"This," he said, "was my original intention. We foreigners, coming to the Flowery Kingdom, have no desire to be lords in the Chinese Church, but rather to be helpers. What the Church needs to-day are men of knowledge, understanding and courage."

Previous to this, Pastor Wang had told me that the burden of the Hangchow Church was more than he could bear. He was, indeed, a large-hearted man, but his abilities were not equal to his virtues. He likened himself to an old show-case devoid of any new wonder to excite interest, and so he had his eye on me. But at that time I did not respond.

Mr. Hudson Taylor and Pastor Wang repeatedly warned me not to depend upon man, whether it were by receiving public funds from the West, or from the assistance of Western friends (indicating, doubtless, help from Mr. Doig for translating books). All such arrangements, they said, savoured of hired labour. How much better would it be to be independent, self-supporting, and self-governing! I was moved by these words, for all along my ambition had been to set up a small model establishment in my own native place. None the less I replied: "With my slender equipment in graces and gifts, it is not seemly that I should accept such responsibilities." To this Mr. Hudson Taylor replied: "On the contrary, I know that God will use you; He is able so to mould you that your every motion shall be blessed."

Mr. Taylor further added: "The number of converts connected with the Hangchow Church, including the

pleased and encouraged to learn that the first Church of the China Inland Mission is becoming self-supporting, and that another, with a liberality which, considering their circumstances, is surprising, is undertaking part of the support of their own pastor."

These extracts show how early Mr. Taylor sought to establish self-supporting Churches.—ED.

out-stations, is sixty-seven. If each one contributed one dollar a year towards the support of their Pastor, there would be nearly seventy dollars. If it were sixty dollars it would be equal to the five dollars a month you are now receiving." I replied: "We need not trouble to discuss such matters." To this Mr. Taylor said: "You assuredly do not calculate whether the emoluments are much or little; but as for the converts, they must shoulder this responsibility. I shall make it plain to all that they ought to fulfil this duty."

This matter therefore being decided, Pastor Wang and I went downstairs together. Then Pastor Wang said to me: "Living in this place is expensive, and though I have been most economical, and moreover have had financial assistance from Mr. Berger in England, I have never had any surplus. You will not be able to be as economical as I am, and with only sixty dollars you will be hard pressed. I have been through this mill, and you ought to discuss it carefully with Mr. Taylor." I replied: "I am not disposed to discuss emoluments. Whatever Mr. Hudson Taylor decides, I am prepared to abide by. If anyone has to speak, I am not the one to do so." "Good!" said Pastor Wang. "God knows, and to follow His will is best."

On Saturday evening Mr. Hudson Taylor said to me: "At the morning service to-morrow please read the two chapters of the Book of Haggai, and I shall then speak about offerings, so that the Church members shall shoulder their burden. After that, I shall ordain you as Pastor."

On the next day [Sunday, June 24, 1877] as I read those chapters I was greatly moved, and perceived that God was really speaking to me. I had no thought of their application to the Church members. After the reading

was finished and Mr. Taylor had given his address, Mr. Taylor added: "Pastor Wang now resigns his charge,¹ and Pastor Ren succeeds him. In the past the Pastor's stipend has been borne by the Mission, but in future it will not be so. That burden should be borne by the Church members. This is what is meant by a self-supporting Church." Upon asking them if they agreed or not, they all held up their hands. Thereupon Mr. Hudson Taylor and Pastor Wang fulfilled the rite of laying-on-of-hands, and thus the Church in Hangchow was established on a self-supporting basis.²

At that time the China Inland Mission Hangchow Church had three out-stations: Siao-shan with ten converts, Yü-hang with seven or eight, and Anchi with five members, making four places in all.

2. A TIME OF TESTING

Now, although Mr. Hudson Taylor estimated that there would be over sixty dollars towards my support, as a matter of fact only a little more than twenty-three dollars was contributed. I had nothing for it but to pawn my clothes. The only thing I did not pawn was a fur jacket.

On New Year's Eve, having no means to provide for the New Year, I asked Pastor Wang to lend me twenty dollars, but he declined, saying it was not convenient. At first I regarded this as a lack of affection between my father-in-law and myself, and was displeased. But later on, after self-examination, I said: "It is I who am in the

¹ According to Mr. Hudson Taylor's statement (see footnote on p. 85), Pastor Ren became assistant pastor to Pastor Wang, who was frequently absent.

² The Pastor is speaking of his own Church only, and is not forgetting the work of other societies in the same city.

wrong. My intention was to trust God, why do I now seek man's pity?"

I told my wife that we could only have Lenten fare at the New Year. But I had already invited the Rev. Yü Chwang-fuh, of the Presbyterian Church, to come and preach for us on the first Sunday in the New Year, and I must at least entertain him to dinner. So I bought a little pork and instructed my wife to cook it in two ways. But, alas! the dog belonging to Missionary Wills stole half of it. I blamed my wife, saying: "Does not the proverb say, that if you allow your roof to leak you are sure to have a wet spell? Why then did you not hide the meat?" It even came to words between us. But what was left of the meat was made into a hash, with vegetables and bean-curd, and had to suffice for the entertaining of our guest.

After this experience I resolved not to look to others, but to give heed to myself. That meant self-control, or in one word, entire dependence upon God.

3. I HELP MYSELF BY TEACHING

Early in 1878 Mr. Hudson Taylor came to Hangchow and I told him of my circumstances, and that I proposed, if he approved, to supplement my income by teaching, this being in harmony with the Apostle Paul's method. He approved, and I immediately opened a school. But as I could not receive any fees until the close of the first quarter, I had to pawn my fur coat and my wife's golden hair-ornaments, to make ends meet.

Subsequently, as the Mission had removed its school from Hangchow to Yangchow, Mr. Taylor arranged that I should instruct seven scholars, these being preachers, or the sons of converts, and for this I was to receive the

sum of 72 dollars per annum. Mr. Wills arranged for their board and lodging.

4. FRUITFUL SERVICE AND SICKNESS

There was a certain convert named Ch'en Pao-lin, a native of the Ch'en village in Fuyang, who had become an inquirer. He had formerly been a leader of the Quietists, but had now led other Quietists to come to Hangchow to hear the Word. He had been baptised by Pastor Wang, but for several years he had not come to see us. Former associates had harassed him by demanding the return of moneys he had previously handled, and he had been driven to the extremity of feigning to be dumb. This made me anxious about him.

[Here follows an account of his search for this convert, the names of a number of persons and places visited being given. Bad weather and floods hindered his movements].

Waiting until the water had somewhat abated, I set out for the Ch'en village. I crossed the ford at Tung-tsekwan, but had to wade in deep water for more than three miles. When I reached the Ch'en village, it was to find that the man I sought was absent in the home of Hu Hung-ts'ing, who also belonged to the Quietists. Here I was entertained, and had an opportunity of preaching to many of the local people. But that night dysentery set in, and I was so ill that Mr. Hu's mother wanted me to be removed. I was, however, able to reassure them, saying that if I did die they would not be responsible. On the fourth day I was able to leave for Hangchow.

Dr. Galt, who took my case in hand, reproached me for not coming to him sooner, but I soon explained to him why I could not do so. He closely confined me to

bed, and limited my food to arrowroot. After more than a month I slowly recovered, and Dr. Galt warned me strictly lest I should have a relapse.

But praised be God! Though the illness was dangerous, the blessing was rich. From this time Ch'en Pao-lin came to Hangchow to partake of the Lord's Supper, while Ling Ch'uen-ts'üen, Ling Yung-ts'üen, Ling Kao-fah, and others, all became converts and were ultimately baptised. Mr. Hu came to worship once a fortnight, but as it was about twenty-five miles from his home at Yangchang to Hangchow, I urged him to join the cause of the Church Missionary Society in Fuyang, which was only some three miles away. This he did, and he and his whole family of five or six persons were all baptised there.

5. FORMATION OF A BUILDING SOCIETY¹

In January 1879, as the Pastor's Sustentation Fund was still insufficient, it was suggested that a Union of eleven members be formed, each person to contribute three dollars. This capital sum was to be refunded by rotation, but without interest. By the side of the chapel was a plot of spare land, and Pastor Wang suggested that a house of five rooms should be built there and the rent be set aside for the Pastor's fund. To secure capital for building, another Union of twelve members was to be formed, each member contributing five dollars. This was to be refunded, with one dollar as interest, from the rent, and not until all had been repaid was I to receive anything. The plan was submitted to Mr. Hudson Taylor when he visited Hangchow, and he kindly undertook that the Mission would be responsible for a monthly refund of six dollars until the capital lent had been

¹ The details in this chapter are somewhat obscure.

restored. The rent was therefore free to refund money Pastor Wang had advanced, and after that I was able to expect my financial burden to be lightened.

6. BREAKING NEW GROUND

Early in 1880, before my school opened, I went with Evangelist Ma to Shenpu, where there were a number of inquirers and converts, and held services there. There was also a man named Wu, who lived not far from Tsehchi, and he invited me to his home to hold services there. This led to other visits, both there and to several places in the Tunglu district. From this arose opportunities for opening chapels in the market town of Tsehchi, in the city of Tunglu, and also to my visiting Yenchow with a view to starting work there. But there were difficulties in securing premises in Yenchow, and after being detained there for ten days we returned home.

7. TRAVELLING FOR HEALTH

In 1881, being out of health, I went to Ningpo to consult Dr. Stephen Barchet, who at that time employed a new method for treating disease. He told me that I was suffering from brain fag; that I did not need medicine, but fresh air among the hills. So, as the cities of Fenghwa, Ninghai, and Tientai, in all of which the China Inland Mission had work, were among the hills, I travelled in those regions.

I had heard that there were many temples on Mount Hwating, in the Tientai district. I was also aware of the popular traditions concerning this region, such as, "He who becomes a hermit here may expect to become a Buddha," or, "He who crosses the 'Stone-slab Bridge'

may depend upon becoming an Immortal." I knew, of course, that these beliefs were false, but I felt that I could not do better than visit the district, see it for myself, and thus be able to expose the fallacy. To this end I secured the company of two companions, in a tour of inspection of the three Buddhist Monasteries, Lang-ts'ing, Fang-kwang, and Hwa-ting. We saw nearly everything of note, including the Stone-slab Bridge, and the Terrace of Sacred Sutras.

At this time Dr. Douthwaite, who about a year earlier had removed to Wenchow, invited me to go there to recruit my health, but as Mr. Hudson Taylor was visiting Ningpo I decided to go and consult him. He told me, after a medical examination, that there was nothing seriously the matter with me, and having given me some medicine to take, he advised me to return to Hangchow, adding: "Mr. Wills is about to leave Hangchow. In future no foreign missionary will be appointed to that station. The Church there will henceforth manage and control its own affairs." So I thereupon returned to Hangchow.

8. CONCERNING THE CHANG VILLAGE

In 1882 the affairs of the Church had so multiplied that I was obliged to relinquish the school. Prior to the Chinese Easter Festival,¹ the affairs of a certain preacher connected with the American Presbyterian Mission North had become complicated. Being no longer of the same religious persuasion as his fellow-clansmen, financial complications had arisen in connection with

¹ *Ch'ing Ming*, literally 'Clear Bright,' is the great festival with which the Chinese greet the spring. The feast is universally observed and is especially the time when the ancestral graves are decorated and repaired.—ED.

the Ancestral Sacrifices. He had asked his Pastor to find some means of settlement, and his Pastor asked me to go with him to assist in this matter.

Now, the Chang village was the home of the most influential Clan in the Fuyang district, and not only was the Clan numerous, but it possessed many scholars. They were unreasonable and even fraudulent, and to have dealings with this Clan was so tough a job that the classical saying: "Even to talk with men of that country is no easy task," applied to them. But after we had been in consultation with them for many days, they agreed to our proposals, and from that time Mr. Sie was released from the obligation of sacrificing to the departed spirits, nor was he deprived of that portion of the Clan property which was legally his.

After obtaining this victory over the spiritual hosts of wickedness I became well acquainted with many of the leading gentry of that village. Five years later another case arose. A young girl, a convert from Chuki, was to be married to an unbeliever in this same village. The young people had been betrothed when very young, but I was able to arrange that they should be married according to the Christian ceremony. This was because of the reputation I had gained in the affairs of Mr. Sie.

9. DANGER TURNED INTO PEACE

For some years I had opened a preaching hall during the summer months in the Panerh side street. This hall was next door to an hotel, and many visitors came to hear the Gospel, so that it was always after the second watch [between 9 and 11 P.M.] before the meetings closed. In addition to the fatigue of walking several miles there and back, there was the labour connected with the

taking down and putting up of six heavy doors, or shutters, which formed the front of the hall. All this taxed my strength to the utmost, and towards the close of the sixth moon I became conscious of a pain in my right loin. At night this spot throbbed with pain, but I forced myself to endure it till the end of the month.

By this time I was in a high fever, and without sufficient strength to rise from bed. After three days' rest, and being no better, I made myself walk to the Church Missionary Society's Hospital for treatment. But a few days later, being worse, I took a conveyance and went again. This time Dr. Duncan Main told me not to come again. He himself came twice every day to see me, giving me medicine to drink, and a plaster for my loin, hoping the trouble would come to a head. But when by the middle of the seventh moon it had not done so, Dr. Main shook his head and said: "There is no hope."¹ He exhorted me not to be distressed, as many persons died younger than I was!

But death had no dread for me. I then asked him if a bran poultice would do good. He said, Yes. So when he had left, I ordered bran to be brought and water to be boiled, and with my head upon the pillow I thought how short my life had been. My desires had been to benefit mankind much, and consequently I had studied assiduously, but now it was to be in vain. If only I had known sooner, could I not have used my precious time to do more for God? As I realised how little I had done, and that I should be ashamed to see His Face, I could not keep back the tears of remorse and grief. But then I

¹ Dr. Duncan Main, to whom we have submitted this passage, writes: "'There is no hope,' does not sound like *me*, as I never said there was no hope till the coffin was *nailed down*. . . . About forty-five years ago I saved his life by operating on a deep-seated psoas abscess. He was a rare saint."

rebuked myself, saying: "You are wrong. Have you not been saved by grace? Why do you not recall the Apostle Paul's words to the Ephesians?" So I arose, and kneeling by my bedside I confessed my sins, and acknowledged with tears that it was all of grace that I could see the Lord's Face. When I rose it was as though a heavy burden had been lifted from my shoulders, and even my body felt relieved.

I then called my wife to comb my hair, to soak the bran, and to change the poultice every hour, day and night without intermission. And every day I rose for singing and prayer. I also made careful records of what was to be kept for my family, and what was to be given away to other people. And when all was finished I awaited the Lord's call without anxiety, and my appetite improved.

After a week the poison came to a head, and Dr. Main said the time had come for an operation. But before this was performed Dr. Main sent letters to the Chinese and foreign workers in all the Missions asking for daily prayer, and especially for united prayer at the time of the operation, between noon and one o'clock. He also asked all in the Hospital to unite.

When the day arrived, he brought his assistant Chang Pao-k'ing and five other persons, and when all was ready he called upon all to kneel in prayer. At twelve noon he began to operate, saying: "It will be a little painful," to which I replied: "That does not matter." Using a curved lancet he lanced the swollen part, hooked open the right kidney, and let out several bowls of pus. Twice every day he sent an assistant to dress the wound and change the bandages, and he was certain to come himself once a day to see that all was going well.

After the lapse of a week without a touch of fever, Dr.

Main said: "Thank God. There is nothing now to hinder your making a good recovery," and went away greatly pleased. I thanked God for His grace, and as I thought of the great favour He had conferred upon me in sparing me for future service, I found that I was weeping, being more moved than before.

After this, Dr. Main's visits were every other day, and when another week had passed, he said: "There is now no further cause for anxiety, but you had better come to my place to convalesce." I asked if it would not do to go into the country, among the hills. Of this he approved, but enjoined that I should not travel for another week. He also informed me that this sickness was the result of over-fatigue, that after the operation the right kidney had shrunk, that henceforth I should not walk much, for should the other kidney be affected I could not be healed.

While my sickness was at its height Mr. Hudson Taylor was in England,¹ and the missionaries wrote to him to tell him that there was no hope of my recovery. To these letters there was no reply, but when Dr. Main went home on furlough Mr. Taylor said to him: "The reason I did not write was that though I knew Pastor Ren's illness was serious, I knew he would not die." Dr. Main told me of this in later days.

10. KNOWING A TREE BY ITS FRUIT

Sometime before my illness, there had been a certain Mr. and Mrs. Tsih of Chuki who had heard the Gospel at Shaohing, but had afterwards removed to Yühang. Mr. W——, who had heard about them, invited them, without consulting the Church members, to come to

¹ Mr. Hudson Taylor was absent from China from February 1883 to February 1885.

Hangchow to be baptised. As the Yühang Church wrote me on the matter, I spoke to Mr. W—— and said: "Caution is an admirable quality."

Knowing that Mr. Tsih was a varnisher by trade, I gave him a job, and closely scrutinised him at his work. By the end of a week I was satisfied that he was not a genuine inquirer, and I accordingly urged Mr. W—— not to baptise him. After little more than a month Mr. W—— went to Yühang and baptised Mrs. Tsih. Almost immediately Mr. and Mrs. Tsih opened a boarding-house, swindled, bought goods on credit, and finally fled to some unknown place.

Sometime later I heard that Mr. S—— of another society,¹ was going to Fuyang to baptise two persons who had removed from Chuki. Being suspicious I questioned Mr. S—— and told him what had happened, so that he took no further steps. But in consequence of a letter I wrote to the evangelist at Fuyang, Mr. and Mrs. Tsih fled and no trace of them could be found.

Now it happened that during the sixth moon [just before the Pastor's illness recorded in the previous chapter], when I went to open the Preaching Hall in Panerh Street I suddenly met Mr. and Mrs. Tsih. Mr. Tsih said he had come to invite me to go to Chuki, as there were many inquirers there who had been influenced by his preaching. I did not believe him, but simply said that at that time I had no leisure. That same evening, after I had opened the hall, Mrs. Tsih came to speak her mind, and to ask me to let bygones be bygones. The next

¹ A good many Chinese names have been omitted from this chapter for the sake of English readers, and it seems best to withhold the names of the missionaries, who are not now living, from what can only be a one-versioned story. That missionaries, in the past, have sometimes failed adequately to consult young and immature churches is probably true.

day they begged Pastor Wang to speak to me on their behalf. I replied: "This man is a confirmed swindler, and should not be listened to." Pastor Wang answered: "But even if he is false, there may be some real inquirers at Chuki. Go and see." To this remark I only said: "We shall see." From this he concluded that I had assented.

Now while I was ill several persons came from Chuki to Hangchow to inquire about the doctrine, and I made up my mind that if I recovered I would certainly go, and look into things for myself. So on the 1st day of the tenth moon [after his illness], I went there to convalesce. But I only remained in bed one day, because of the number of persons who crowded into my host's home to hear the Gospel. In spite of my illness I preached to them, but when they wished to give money for a chapel, and to buy some land for an endowment, I declined to receive it.

After a stay of more than a month I was able to return to Hangchow in good health.

II. DIFFERENTIATING TRUE AND FALSE

In February 1883,¹ in company with Mr. Hsü, who had a medicine chest and magic-lantern, I again visited the home of my former host, Mr. Tsiang, in Chuki. By day we preached and administered medicine, and by night we showed the lantern. In that place the Tsiang Clan was the most powerful. One of the gentry, who was known as the District Magistrate of the Eighth Ward, invited me to a banquet, and after we had become well acquainted he said to me: "Your host's father was straight and upright, and had splendid talents. During the Taiping rebellion he drilled volunteers and protected

¹ The correct date should probably be 1884 ; see footnote to p. 97.

the place. As he died doing his duty, he had the title of Hereditary Noble of the Eighth Rank conferred upon him. It is a pity that his son does not attend to his proper business. The ninety-six acres of rice-fields belonging to his Clan, which he ought to inherit, together with other land and buildings among the hills, have been managed for him lest he should sell them. But now that he has become a Christian he will be able to do what is right, so the Clan property has been handed over to him."

It was then for the first time that I understood. The man was making use of the Gospel as a pretext, so as to obtain possession of the property. Of all the more than forty persons Mr. Tsih had induced to come and hear the Gospel, the majority had some axe of their own to grind. I therefore pasted up a poster setting forth clearly the purport of the Christian religion, and removed from the roll a number of names, saying they must bring forth fruit meet for repentance before the Church could receive them. Those whose names were not removed were the following [here come a number of names]. I promptly left my host's home and removed elsewhere, and after a time returned to Hangchow. I had spent about a month at Chuki, and in the autumn I went again for another month, with the result that the sincere hearers of the Word increased in numbers.

12. IN DANGER OF BEING KILLED

Early in 1884, the Dragon-Lamp Guild requisitioned a certain subscription for the Lantern Festival from an inquirer named Yü who belonged to Chuki. He refused [regarding it as for idolatrous purposes]. Thereupon certain of his clansmen, inspired with enmity against him, sought to kill him. As soon as this news reached me

I hastened to heal the breach. I invited the Elders of the Clan to secure an amicable settlement, but they refused to move in the matter. In the evening I talked with one of them till well past midnight, but he continued doggedly resolute, so we parted. Next day this very man hired three men [their names are given], to pursue me with knives and kill me. Through God's goodness, though these men pursued me to the foot of the Menling Mountains, I was at the top ere they arrived, and so was not overtaken.

A report of this attempt upon my life soon spread, and some of the local people came to see me about it. I took the opportunity of exhorting them to persuade my adversary to come to terms, but without avail; so I reported the matter to the district magistrate. Moreover, my bedding and my clothing had been stolen during the night, so that I returned to Hangchow with nothing but the things I wore.

13. SHAME TURNED TO GLORY

After a lapse of two days, two men came to tell me they had traced my stolen belongings, and that if I would go to a certain home I could regain my goods. I opposed the plan, and said: "My baggage was too smart; it incited to robbery; it was my own fault." (Pastor Wang had told Mr. Hudson Taylor about my loss, and he hearing that my loss was considerable had said: "When your luggage is too elegant it attracts attention; and that is what travellers should avoid. This loss is due to youth and inexperience.") "Since the goods are lost, it is my duty to rebuke myself, and not others. Besides I am not certain that the man you mention is the thief. I may be charged with trespass."

To this they said: "We already have ascertained the

facts; and since a considerable sum is involved, why not investigate?" So I agreed to go.

On the morrow we went together. The parents of the culprit were much perturbed, and bade their son-in-law entertain us. The son-in-law said: "It is difficult to prove that A-erh stole the things." I replied: "That is true. But even if he did, it shall not bring hurt to him. If the goods are here, please return them. If they are already pawned, please hand me the pawn-tickets, that I may redeem them, and let it rest with his conscience as to whether he refunds me or no. I am a Christian. Please consider the words of Jesus"; and taking the New Testament which I carried with me, I directed his attention to the 5th chapter of Matthew, from verse 38 to the end: "'You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you,'" etc. I explained this teaching to him. Moreover, I added: "This book was not written after my loss, so please believe my words, and do not suspect duplicity." He then called for the suspected thief to come forward.

I said to Mr. Kin [the man from whose house the goods had been stolen, and one of the men who had urged Pastor Ren to come]: "We must obey Christ's teaching. If he be the man, say so; if it is not he, say it is not." When the man entered, Mr. Kin said: "This is not the man who lodged in my house the night the goods were stolen." The accused's father then said: "This is just and right." But at that moment the countenance of the elder brother of the suspected man changed towards me, and he said: "To bring such an accusation against a good man during the New Year festivals is intolerable. You must bear the expense of ten theatrical performances, provide a feast of one hundred tables, and pay one hundred and twenty dollars as compensation for this

loss of face. And these theatrical displays and feasts must be given in the two towns of Yikiao and Linpu."

By this time a goodly crowd had gathered, and there was no small strife of tongues. I secretly prayed to the Lord, saying: "O Lord, the searcher of men's hearts; I came here with no thought of brow-beating anyone, but with a sincere desire to treat others in accordance with Thy Holy Word. From lack of wisdom I yielded to the advice of others; but it would have been better not to have come. Things being as they are, the glory or the shame of just one person like myself would not be sufficient cause for me to ask Thee to intervene. That which troubles me is the effect this may have upon Thy cause in six places where there are chapels. I beseech Thee to give a happy issue out of this distress."

While I was praying the whole crowd were shouting: "Do you promise, or not?" After prayer I suddenly became bolder, and striking my hand upon the table I said: "I will not promise, and I have abundant reason for not doing so. Bid Mr. Tsiang [the son-in-law mentioned above] come and speak with me." But Mr. Tsiang had gone elsewhere, and could not be found. For two hours, from 5 P.M. to 7 P.M., the crowd continued to clamour, but I resolutely answered them without being intimidated by numbers.

At length a constable arrived with handcuffs and chains, and having handcuffed both Mr. Kin and me he led us away. I said to the constable: "If you provide us this evening with a good meal and comfortable sleeping quarters, you shall be repaid fivefold." There were some who said to the constable: "You are in for trouble. This man having neither changed his tune, nor changed in countenance, is no ordinary person. Be careful how you treat him."

It was not long ere Mr. Tsiang himself arrived in pursuit of us. He repeatedly apologised, saying that he had been called away on account of his wife's illness, and that he had no idea we should be so discourteously treated. He begged that I would allow the handcuffs to be removed, but to this I would not consent until he had begged me four times. Then I agreed.

Once more I was escorted to the home of the suspect, where there was an octogenarian, the head of the Han Clan. He acknowledged the outrage I had suffered, and said that on the morrow the gentry of his Clan would consider what recompense I should receive.

On the morrow one of the gentry came with the head of the Clan, and invited me to his home. Every corner was filled with spectators, as I related all that I had said to Mr. Tsiang. And Mr. Tsiang acknowledged the truth of what I said. After deliberation, the gentry ordered that an apology should be made to me, that I should be entertained to a feast, and that then I was to be sent in a sedan chair, with a complimentary escort, to the Christian Chapel at Siaoshan.

As the constable had broken the law by employing handcuffs, I reported him to the magistrate at Siaoshan. He thereupon summoned the constable to appear, and had him publicly beaten. Thus was this matter changed from shame to honour, and the Church was spared reproach. Thus Satan failed to display his cunning. Great is the grace of the Lord!

14. A SOFT ANSWER TURNS AWAY WRATH

In the second month I hastened to Chuki to settle the trouble which had arisen between Mr. Yü and a relative over the Lantern Festival. Upon receipt of my

letter the district magistrate had issued a proclamation forbidding anyone to coerce Christians to subscribe, and commanding the gentry to settle the trouble. But the gentry feared to intervene, and the official promptly ordered the arrest of the offender. [This was the man who had hired three ruffians to kill Pastor Ren.]

Just as I reached Chuki, whom should I see but this very man being led in chains by the Yamen runners, with the gentry following. The gentry immediately asked me if I could not mediate. I replied: "There is no thought of making trouble over a trifling matter. If the offender will repent, there is no reason why the matter should not be settled here." I then offered some New Year cakes to the gentry, and a bowlful to the prisoner, saying: "If you henceforth repent, and the gentry are willing to be surety for you, I will tell the official underlings to take off your chains." The crowd was delighted. Thereupon I wrote the magistrate, and the man was set free.

15. MORE FRUIT AT CHUKI

During the fourth month I examined four inquirers [the names are given] as to their progress in the Faith. I visited Chuki specially for this purpose, and to arrange that the Church should gather in the home of Kin Ta-fang for baptism. I also arranged that a Preaching Hall should be opened in Ta-kiao-chen.

16. WORK DURING HOLIDAYS

During the summer I obtained some accommodation in a Buddhist Temple on the Kengwu Mountain, so as to escape the great heat. This mountain is high, the road from the foot to the temple being about three miles

long. Every evening the converts and inquirers came up the mountain to study the Scriptures, returning to their homes below in the morning. Many Buddhist pilgrims also visited the temple, and I was able to preach to them.

There were three priests attached to this temple, one, Ko-tsing, the resident manager, who descended the mountain every day to solicit subscriptions. Another, named A-ming, whose duty was to look after the temple, while the third was a blind priest who all the day was reciting prayers. The two last mentioned heard the Word with great delight, but Ko-tsing resisted.

At this time China and France were at war,¹ and there was fighting in Annam, while wild rumours prevailed everywhere in regard to complications with the Roman Catholics. Now Ko-tsing intentionally spread the report that the temple was to be turned into a Christian Chapel.

Toward the east was the village Chuh-shan-tang, the inhabitants of which had a reputation for fighting, and were indeed constantly hired by other villages to fight for them. These people were inflamed by these reports, and they gathered together with the intention of coming up the mountain to kill me. But by God's goodness two of their number, leading men, offered to make careful investigations first. They therefore came to the temple, found that there was no truth whatever in the reports, and so went down and dispersed the mob. I only learned about the extent of the danger when it was passed.

After a stay of more than seventy days in the temple I visited several places to preach the Gospel, so that when I returned home the autumn was well advanced.

¹ After a protracted conflict a Treaty of Peace was signed between China and France on June 9, 1885.

17. MERCIFULLY SPARED BLINDNESS

In the late autumn, being about to go to Yühang to administer the Lord's Supper, I instructed Colporteur Ma to take my bedding to the day-boat wharf outside the Wulin Gate, and wait for me. When I arrived he was not there, but as the boat was about to leave I was obliged to travel without my luggage. During the journey we met with strong winds and heavy rain, and although the weather became suddenly cold I was unable to borrow any additional garments. That night, after waiting up till midnight, I had to go to bed with only a borrowed quilt. The colporteur, it afterwards transpired, had gone to the night-boat wharf by mistake.

After administering the Sacrament, I returned to Hangchow as I had caught a bad chill and was feeling ill. My temperature ran high, and my eyes became inflamed beyond endurance. When I consulted Dr. Main he said: "There is deep-seated inflammation, with serious risk of blindness."¹ When I heard this I was greatly alarmed and depressed. I prayed repeatedly: "Lord, if Thou dost permit blindness, knowing it is good for me, Thy will be done."

In the Lord's mercy there was a change for the better, but in about two months' time, before I was fully recovered, there was an urgent call for me to go to Siaoshan. Though Dr. Main warned me of the danger of a relapse should there be cold winds, I felt I must take the risk and go.

18. MORE EYE TROUBLE

In the early days of 1885 I visited Chuki, opened a place of worship at Shih-mu-wu, and crossing the mountains preached at Hung Wu, and other places. When

¹ Dr. Main writes: "The trouble doubtless was Glaucoma."

I returned to Hangchow there was a recurrence of eye trouble. Once more I went to the Church Missionary Society's Hospital, where I remained four months. Though I was cured, my eyesight was impaired for the rest of my life. I gratefully acknowledge Dr. Main's great kindness. I had hoped to leave at the end of two months, but Dr. Main strongly urged me to stay, saying that Mr. Meadows, of my own Mission, had paid fees for two months, and had requested him to detain me until I was really better. It was not easy to resist such bounteous kindness, so I remained.

On the 19th of the sixth moon, two persons came to tell me that as there were special festivities at the Goddess of Mercy shrine next door, they had decided to open the Preaching Hall in the evening. I approved, and told them to be careful to proclaim nothing but the Gospel. That night, however, the rowdies broke down the doors and gave trouble. They then came to me for advice, saying that Dr. Main was away in the hills, and I must tell them what to do. I said: "United prayer is the best plan. God has promised that if we call upon Him in the day of trouble He will deliver. Thereupon, I led them in prayer, and then under God's guidance appointed to each one his task, saying, however: "You must not cease from prayer, for if we with one heart trust in our Almighty God we shall have our misfortunes turned into profit, to the glory of His name." And so it was. To God be the glory for an increase of sight to my spiritual eyes at that time!

19. THE WORK OF THE DEVIL

In the autumn I visited Chuki again. Two months later I was told by Chang Fu-tseo, that there was a

certain Mr. Yü at Tsiang-kia-wu, who wanted to open his house for the preaching of the Gospel. I asked how it was that I had heard nothing of this man during my visit to Chuki, and urged great caution. A little later, theatricals were held in that village, and Mr. Yü was assessed at seven hundred cash as his share. He refused to pay, and, contrary to my instructions, Mr. Chang went to Mr. Yü's home and assumed responsibility for dealing with the matter.

While he was there, some mischief-workers rushed in and accused him of immoral relations with the daughter of the house, and dragging him out they cut off his ears. They also stole some of Mr. Yü's things, and seizing his concubine sold her to another man.

When messengers came to Hangchow to report these things and to ask for my help, I refused to have anything to do with it. Ultimately, after pressure from many sides, I wrote to the official asking him to investigate, but no good came of it as the official was in league with the instigators of the trouble. But later, when his term of office had expired I sought an audience with his successor, for the local persecution was so bitter that several tens of converts and inquirers fled from Chuki to Hangchow for refuge; but, by his tortuous methods, he avoided an issue.

One day, one of the Yamen Secretaries came to an out-station where I was staying, and said the matter could not be sifted to the bottom, but could only be compromised. I said: "It cannot be concluded without a thorough investigation." He replied: "That is impossible." I, in my turn, said: "It is possible." He then asked me how? and I answered: "You know there is a God." He immediately opened the door and going outside looked up into the sky and chanted: "God surely is up

there, but this matter is profoundly difficult. If it is cleared up then I will join the Church." I then invited him to take a seat, and record in black and white the day and date, saying: "The day when this trouble will be settled will come; but it is by no means certain that you will become a believer." He was startled and changed colour. After chatting for a time he left. The trouble *was* justly settled, but alas! that man was not converted.

20. DIVINE GUIDANCE

In the early spring of 1886, the converts and inquirers who had sought refuge in Hangchow returned to their homes, as it was time to commence work on their farms. A little later I began to visit a number of places in the same neighbourhood. One day, when on the road, a certain Mr. Tsiang stopped me and asked me where I was going. I said to Shih-mu-wu. He urged me to do no such thing, as the ringleader in the recent trouble was ready for any deed of violence. I answered: "Our Lord has said that though two sparrows are not worth one cent, not one of them can fall to the ground without our Heavenly Father's permission. Therefore, those who have God to protect them need not be anxious."

We then separated, I going first to Tuhshan, and in the afternoon to Shih-mu-wu. At dusk the converts and inquirers all arrived for worship, each one bringing some weapon to guard against attack. These weapons they piled in the corner of the chapel, and only removed them when I had exhorted them to do so.

A few days later, being troubled by the way the converts were being harassed, I engaged two chair-bearers to take me to the district city, in order to request the magistrate to make a settlement. One of the chair-

bearers had been very keen to go, but I had suspected nothing. It had been decided that we should travel by the San Pass, but *en route* I suddenly asked: "Which is the better way, by the San or by the Nan-chien Pass?" The man who had been so eager to go exhausted language in praise of the San Pass, but the other bearer said that there was nothing to choose between the two, so far as distance was concerned. Suddenly, moved by God, I changed my intention, and decided in favour of the Nan-chien Pass. The next day I learned, in the district city, that the ringleader with a band of men all armed had been lying in wait for me at the top of the San Pass. Then I awoke to the fact that the bearer who had been so keen to go by the San Pass was an accomplice of the persecutors. My sudden change of mind had been the Lord's doing.

21. HARASSED TO DEATH

During the fourth moon, one of the inquirers was so beset by this same band of men that he was driven from his home. Ultimately he returned one evening, and in his distress committed suicide by taking opium. As soon as I heard this I hastened to Chuki, and reported the case to the magistrate, and asked for an official inquiry. But when he set forth with his underlings, the persecutors were seen, all armed, on a hill-top, ready to slay any who attacked them. The underlings, without exception, all fled, but I and the converts remained. However, the ringleader and his band all decamped. But subsequently, after the ringleader had been brought to trial, his followers scattered like so many birds and beasts, and the converts and inquirers dwelt in peace.

The widow of the one who had committed suicide,

showed real signs of faith, and assisted the work by the loan or gift of a house. I thereupon promptly opened an out-station at Tsiang-kia-wu, and in order to lay the foundations well, I visited the place regularly for the space of a month. In the fifth month I returned to Hangchow.

22. OVERCOMING SATAN AT A WEDDING

Miss Yü T'u-ku, the daughter of the inquirer who had committed suicide, had in her early days been betrothed to a boy in the Chang village of the Fuyang county. In the seventh month, the bridegroom's father heard that the aforementioned ringleader was planning to abduct the bride-elect and sell her to another family. Now Miss Yü was a baptised believer, but as the people of the Chang village were a wild set, no one believed they would permit a Christian wedding. And one of the preachers connected with the American Presbyterian Church, who was a native of this village, agreed that it would be exceedingly difficult.

In view of all these things, I went to prepare a plan of action. On the 3rd of the eighth moon, I personally saw the bridegroom's father, and obtained his promise that both sides would fulfil their parts. But everybody believed that this could not be done.

When the day for the marriage arrived, I again visited the bridegroom's home, and had the agreement confirmed. That evening I, with a company of six converts, walked in procession in front of the bride's gaily coloured chair. When we had nearly reached the village, some of the gentry invited us into their homes for entertainment, but seeing through their stratagem I bade the converts escort the chair straight to the bridegroom's home. As

the time for the wedding had arrived, the bridegroom's family tried every device to compel Miss Yü to conform to the ancient customs, but she refused to alight from the bridal chair until I, her pastor, arrived. One of the converts, therefore, hastened to fetch me. I held the bridegroom's father to his promise, with the result that the bride and bridegroom had a Christian wedding. It was already daybreak before the ceremonies were completed.

Meanwhile, the whole village was in ferment, everyone asserting that the bride must visit the Ancestral Hall and kneel before the Ancestral Tablets. Several tens of men rushed in, intent upon maltreating me. I carried on as though there was no trouble, and ordered the converts on no account to speak to anyone impolitely. Through the Lord's goodness when the crowd saw me sitting peacefully, undisturbed in countenance or voice, they, in a short time, went away. I remained until after the midday meal, and when I took my leave I told the bridegroom's father that he must not attempt by force to compel the bride to any breach of her faith. But after we had left, repeated efforts were made to compel her to conform to the local customs. Happily, however, Miss Yü resolutely kept the Faith, and was preserved from error.

23. OPENING HUCHOW FOR ANOTHER

In view of the fact that there were only about one hundred missionaries in China connected with the China Inland Mission, and that the harvest was ripe and the labourers few, the Mission had decided to unite in prayer to God that one thousand new workers might be added to its ranks. If only one hundred persons would unite

in prayer to this end, it was certain it would be granted.¹ Being invited to become one of the hundred pledged to pray for this, I went to Shanghai early in the eleventh month to record my name and sign the agreement.

At that time the American Baptist Mission had a Mr. M—— living in Shaohing. He had conceived the idea of opening Huchow, but he had been driven out each time he had attempted to settle there. He now wished me to assist him to this end. He first asked Mr. Meadows, the China Inland Mission superintendent in the province, to approach me on the matter, but Mr. Meadows, knowing I was heavily committed to the Chuki affairs, did not feel free to add to my burdens. Mr. M—— then applied to Mr. Stevenson, the Mission's Deputy China Director, asking him to approach me by letter. But instead of writing me, Mr. Stevenson said he would prefer to wait until he could consult me personally. So when I went to Shanghai to sign the agreement he opened up this matter.

"To open Huchow to the preaching of the Gospel," I said, "is one of my cherished desires. Unfortunately, the British Minister in Peking is opposed to the China Inland Mission attempting this,² and for the same reason it is not easy for the Church Missionary Society to move in the matter. But that an American society should now desire to open up work in that neglected corner of God's vineyard is most excellent. I much desire to assist; but foreigners are by disposition hasty; they want everything finished as soon as begun, and have not patience to

¹ Pastor Ren has somewhat confused two different matters. At the close of 1885 the C.I.M. had 177 missionaries in the field. During 1886 the Mission united in prayer for one hundred new workers during 1887, not for one thousand. But at the General Missionary Conference in May 1890 the Conference resolved to make an appeal for one thousand men within five years.

² See p. 73 where previous riots are recorded.

go slowly. Consequently they frequently have beginnings but no completions. I do not know that if this matter were placed in my hands that it would be easy; it would certainly demand much patience and endurance."

"What you say is true," replied Mr. Stevenson. "I have been in your honourable country for many years, and I realise that hasty measures will not succeed. I feel sure Mr. M—— will accept your guidance."

To this I further said: "There is another weakness common to foreigners. Slandorous reports easily reach them, and when they are half-way through, they repent of their original intention. If it is desired that I shoulder this heavy responsibility, I must be given full authority to act as I think best, and even then I cannot be sure I shall succeed."

"Wait until I have asked Mr. M—— if he will agree to your conditions," said Mr. Stevenson, "and I will let you know."

Not long after my return to Hangchow, the Rev. J. H. Horsburgh called upon me to assure me that Mr. M—— would accept my conditions, and that I had full power to act in any way that seemed best to me. With these assurances I undertook the task, knowing, of course, that results were with God.

Towards the close of the year Mr. M—— appointed a Mr. Pan to accompany me to Huchow. We lodged in the home of a milk-seller outside the East Gate. Now as our host had many friends living in the northern suburb, we were able to rent a house outside the North Gate, and it was agreed that the place should be opened as a Christian Chapel during the first month of the New Year, for at least one year. In the deed it was stated that the arrangement was open for reconsideration at the close of the year, but that neither party would go back

during the period arranged. Two copies of the deed were drawn up, each party keeping one copy. We then returned to Hangchow.

Immediately upon my return it was reported to me that Mr. M—— had said: "I wished to live inside the city, why was a house rented outside?" And further: "The shortest time should have been at least five years. I do not approve." To this Mr. Pan replied: "Full powers were given to Pastor Ren; how could I but agree."

24. OPENING HUCHOW

In January 1887, when I was about to go to Chuki, I asked Mr. M—— to arrange for Mr. Pan to go to Huchow to put the house in order, but on no account to attempt to preach. Then in the third month I went myself to Huchow, and submitted a copy of the agreement to the official for his perusal. At the same time Mr. Pan and I began to preach. In an instant the place was in an uproar, but after a few days matters quieted down. I heard a little later that the gentry had gone to the official, and pressed him to take action as on the previous occasion.¹ The official showed them my letter and the agreement, saying, that as the arrangement was for one year only, all they had to do was to prevent the landlord extending the lease. Forthwith the disturbances ceased.

25. BUYING PROPERTY AT HUCHOW

After the events already recorded, I told Mr. Pan that as our present accommodation was only for a year, we

¹ It appeared that after the disturbances which had attended the attempted occupation of the city by the China Inland Mission (see p. 73) the gentry had made private arrangements with the police to prevent any foreigner securing a settlement in the city. For further information, and the placard they put out, see Chapter xxvii.

must search for a more permanent residence. We therefore spent our mornings roaming through the city on the look-out for any likely house, while we gave the afternoons to preaching. One day, by God's favour, we saw a house on the main street inside the East Gate. It was owned by a carpenter, and after negotiations we fixed a purchase price at a little more than eight hundred dollars. The carpenter was, however, afraid to draw up a deed of sale, so I said to him: "You wait, and be guided by whether there is any disturbance during the next month or two at our present quarters outside the North Gate.

In the middle of the fourth month, the carpenter decided to sell, and Mr. M—— sent the necessary money by the hand of a Mr. Ku. I therefore drew up a lease in perpetuity, according to the Sino-American Treaty, in which it was stated that the property could be redeemed by the seller at the end of thirty years, but should he fail to redeem it the tenant would become the proprietor in perpetuity.

When the lease was signed the carpenter said to me: "If because of what I am doing I should incur the wrath of the officials and gentry, and get into deep water, I shall look to you to succour me." To this Messrs. Pan, Ku and I all agreed. I also said to my companions: "It will be necessary for Mr. M—— also to agree to what we have promised, for it would be contrary to the spirit of the Gospel to involve another in suffering because he assisted us. We could not see another in danger of death and not attempt to save him." After saying this I returned to Hangchow.

On hearing of my return, Mr. M—— came to see me. I then put three things before him:

1. That he should refrain from going to Huchow for at

least a month or two, and that even then he should only inspect the property from the street, or from the city wall.

2. That he should make a copy of the lease, and have it registered by the American Consul-General.

3. That when the gentry knew of this registration, there would certainly be trouble, and that he must see that the carpenter was not allowed to suffer.

To all these things Mr. M—— heartily agreed.

A few weeks after this, Mr. M——, who had been to the Annual Conference of his Society, held that year at Shaohing, came to me and said he had been asked at the Conference why, since the property had been bought and the money paid over, the property could not be occupied? He said he had had no adequate answer to give. In answer I used an illustration. I said: "If you drive a nail into a piece of wood, which is the easier, to draw it out immediately or after it has been in the wood for a long time?" He agreed that it would be more difficult after a lapse of time, but he still pressed for the real reason. I then said: "The carpenter, who has sold you the property, still has the purchase money handy. If he is persecuted by the officials and gentry, he can bring that money and some poison, and place both before you, and say: 'Here is your money. Take it back and release me, or else I shall be compelled to commit suicide.' Could you allow him to commit suicide?"

"Well," said Mr. M——, "but what if we wait, what then?" "Why," said I, "after a lapse of time he will have spent the money, and cannot offer it back to you. The officials and gentry would then be able to gain nothing by persecuting him." "I see," said Mr. M——, and took back my answer to the Conference, which satisfied them for a time.

26. TROUBLE AT HUCHOW

Early in the autumn, Mr. M——, who had been to Mokanshan during the great heat, came to Hangchow, and with a smile confessed a fault. I asked him what? and he replied: "I have stolen a march on you. I have been to look at the house you bought in Huchow. First I viewed it from the city wall, and then I went inside. It is most suitable; I shall be able to live there with my family."

A month or more later he went again, and this time spent a couple of days there. As all was quiet, he intended after the Conference at Shaohing was concluded to remove there with his family. When he told me this I said: "Don't be impatient," to which he replied: "I guarantee there will be no further trouble." That very afternoon, just as Mr. M—— was about to take the ferry to Shaohing, the two middlemen arrived from Huchow to tell Mr. Ku that the city was in an uproar. Mr. Ku at once took the men to the ferry to urge Mr. M—— to return. He excused himself, saying he had no plan of action, and moreover his wife was already on board, and concluded by saying: "Ask Pastor Ren to take the matter up for me."¹

When Mr. Ku told me this, I said: "Insist upon the middlemen returning to Huchow by the night boat, and tell them to instruct the carpenter who sold us the property to come to Hangchow at once. He can go into the hospital to be cured of his opium habit [so as to be out of the way], while his wife can reside elsewhere in peace.

The next day I went myself to Huchow, taking with

¹ Literally "Lend me his chopsticks." Compare our word "Cat's-paw."—ED.

me a Mr. Tsao, and a trustworthy convert who would be a reliable messenger. When we reached Huchow we found the city well covered with anonymous placards. Taking the young convert with me, I went on a tour of investigation, taking note of those placards which were placed in a low and handy position. When all was quiet, and the night well advanced, I handed my messenger a basin of water and a towel, telling him to soak thoroughly a number of the easily reached placards, and then return a little later and take them down, and bring them to me. He brought me four copies.¹

The same night I wrote three letters, one for the Prefect, and one for each of the district magistrates, and in each letter I enclosed a copy of the placards. In my letter I called attention to the fact that the style of these placards was elegant, and the penmanship superb, showing that they were not the work of uneducated persons. The officials therefore could not lay the blame at the door of the man in the street. I also mentioned that a copy had been sent to the American Consul-General at Shanghai to be kept on record there.

In the meantime numbers of people came to the Preaching Hall to ask if we had seen the placards. I answered them in a genial manner, saying that copies had been sent to the officials who would deal with the matter, and then I asked them patiently to listen while I explained the purpose for which we preached. In a little time the crowd scattered.

27. A COPY OF THE PLACARD

“The foreign devils’ false religion of Jesus, ever since it entered the country, has erected places of worship and

¹ A translation of the placards is given in the next chapter.

deluded the people. Its teaching is more poisonous than opium. Opium only injures the body; the religion of Jesus injures the heart. The followers of this religion will, as they increase in numbers, certainly instigate rebellion. The Taiping rebellion was the product of this religion and did much harm.¹ Our prefecture has long been known as an enlightened and civilised region. The foreign devils are now beginning to erect chapels everywhere, so that there is no place free from them save Huchow, and this exception springs from our personal zeal.

"On a previous occasion we drove these people out without troubling the officials, and at that time the whole city resolved, that should any inhabitant sell houses or land to these foreign devils, we would all assemble at the sound of the gong and, after having driven out the demons, we would expel the landlord and his family, men, women, and children, and never should any of their descendants be allowed to return. Furthermore, all their property should be confiscated.

"Now, quite recently we have seen one of those demons, who propagate this heretical religion, coming and going within the city, and we have ascertained that a house inside the East Gate has been sold to him, to live in and use for the promotion of this false faith. In the evening this demon returned to a house outside the North Gate, which had secretly been secured by him. All good citizens should consider the disaster that will be brought upon us, and take steps to prevent it. Moreover, there should be a careful investigation concerning these two houses, to find out who sold them. Having ascertained the facts, we should sound the gong and do as we resolved: first expel the demon, and then the persons

¹ The leader of this rebellion was an unbaptised inquirer.

who sold the property, and afterwards confiscate their property for the public good. And if the demon has with him a Chinese accomplice, he must be seized and compelled to divulge the real facts. There will be no need to kill him, but it will suffice to eject him with the others.

"In every place where the demons come and secure an entry, it is always some vagabond who plays the spy. Ever since the Taiping rebellion, patriotic gentry have opened halls in the prefecture where the teaching of the Sacred Edict,¹ and other similar literature may be expounded, so that the gentry and the people now have a fair knowledge of what is right. In consequence our harvests have been good and the silk industry has flourished. If you are now deceived by this false religion, all this good work will be thrown away.

"What is taught in China is found in the books of the great sages and famous men, and their words do not depart from filial piety, deference to elder brethren, loyalty and fidelity. What the foreigners preach are the books of the false religion of Jesus, which religion is without father or prince.²

"No worthy man should regard this as an indifferent matter, but at the first stroke of the drum he should bestir himself. The way to expel them is not to strike the demon, or trouble the officials, but with one heart drive them out ourselves. Then by refraining from selling them houses or lands, we shall mow the weeds and eradicate the roots.

"This manifesto is for all the men of Huchow, for all

¹ One section of this Sacred Edict is devoted to an *exposé* of the supposed evils of Christianity. It is the Roman Catholic religion that is mentioned, but in all probability the Roman and Protestant Churches were not then clearly differentiated.

² That is, it is thought to belittle filial piety or ancestral worship and loyalty.

who eat its produce and tread its soil. All should shoulder the responsibility of getting rid of this heretical religion, and thus uphold morality and virtue; and recompense the Emperor's grace to one and all. This is the way to serve our Sovereign. This is for your information."

At the bottom of this placard were the four large characters: "DRIVE OUT FALSE DEMONS."

28. THE OFFICIALS AND GENTRY DELIBERATE

In the afternoon, I and my colleagues went into the city to drink tea in a tea-shop near the Prefect's Yamen. We saw the two district magistrates and the gentry pass in their sedan-chairs. I bade Mr. Tsao keep a strict watch on the entrance to the Yamen, and by so doing we learnt that the colonel, the major, the captain, the two district magistrates, and all the gentry of the city were gathered together in the Prefect's Yamen deliberating. I knew that the placards and the covering letters were being discussed.

At dusk the beadle of the North Gate suburb came to me and said: "I have had a great fright to-day. The Wucheng District Magistrate summoned me to his Yamen, and demanded to know why I had not reported to him that this hall had been rented. Fortunately, I was able to say that I had heard that the occupants of the hall had themselves notified the matter direct by letter. For a moment he was silent, but then added: 'Go and tell the landlord that when the one year's agreement has transpired, he is by no means to re-let the house. Should he disobey, both he and the beadle will be brought into court.'"

From these remarks I gathered that the officials and the gentry were on their guard, and that there would not

be a riot. Being anxious, however, about the carpenter's wife, I went to urge her to go to Hangchow for a time. But being the obstinate woman that she was she refused to go.

29. THE GENTRY'S DARK PLOT

After a few days, I engaged a passage for Hangchow. Just as I was about to start, the convert who had been left as caretaker in the newly acquired house inside the East Gate overtook me. He told me that as he was passing through a restaurant on East Street, he had seen a tall and venerable man, more than sixty years of age, going towards the shop. Two young men inside called out: "Your Worship, what about it?" He replied: "That plan will not do; I have a better one. A tin of kerosene, late at night, will answer the purpose. Happily the house is a detached one." The two young men clapped their hands to show their approval.

I went on board my boat, but as soon as I arrived in Hangchow I wrote to the Kweian District Magistrate, in Mr. M——'s name, informing him of what I had heard. If the house should be destroyed by fire, the old gentleman would be held responsible.

How clearly we saw God's good hand in allowing the caretaker to overhear what was said. Although as a man he was not up to much, in this he was invaluable.

30. SOME OFFICIAL SCHEMES

After no great interval a communication from the Wucheng Magistrate reached me. This was as follows: "Speaking in a general sort of way, the people of Huchow are of a restive disposition, and consequently somewhat quarrelsome. Now in preaching the Gospel it is necessary

that the people should be willing to hear, otherwise there can be no goodwill between the people and converts. Considering the facts judicially, it is evident that the intelligence of the people is not yet equal to the situation, and though the officials have done all within their power, it is a difficult matter to force a reluctant people. There can be no ultimate satisfaction where the methods adopted are ill-suited, so it seems advisable that the Preaching Hall should be closed until more favourable conditions arise."

To this I replied: "It is not only in the prefecture of Huchow that people are restive; that is true of the whole Empire. Opposition to the spread of the Gospel is no new thing, but where the officials have been friendly, would-be disturbers of the peace have been restrained. As a result the number of chapels has considerably increased in recent years. Were I to agree to your suggestion, and close the hall in Huchow, there is no reason why that should not be made a precedent for doing the same elsewhere. And, moreover, several of the places which have halls are subject to the Prefect of Huchow. To close these buildings would be a poor recompense to the pioneers who, with such success, opened them."

As the official was in a quandary he made every effort to arrest the carpenter landlord, but without success. [He was probably in the Hangchow Hospital breaking off opium.] He therefore had his wife arrested and brought into court, and he tried to entangle her by saying: "The money you received from the sale of the property is probably spent, but if your husband will come out of his hiding-place I will find the money, so that he can redeem the property, and thus escape the evil consequences of what he has done."

But as she said she did not know where her husband

had gone, he had her cast into prison, and would not even let her out on bail for her confinement.

31. A GAME OF THE GENTRY

During the Chinese New Year holidays, in 1888, Mr. M—— came to Huchow to furnish the house in preparation for his family's coming. During the Festival of the Dragon Lanterns which shortly followed, the procession passed the door of his house every evening. The people purposely made a row, and came soliciting contributions towards the expenses. Mr. M—— was vexed beyond control at this.

As I happened to be passing through Huchow at this time, he asked me to stay with him. One day, when taking a stroll together on the city wall, he turned to me and said: "How can one endure such doings as these?" I said: "There is a way." "What is it?" he asked. "There is," I said, "a most excellent and a most worthy way." "Do you mean the way of the knees?" he asked. "Even so," said I, "that is the only way of power," and kneeling at once on the city wall we prayed together about it.

That very evening the disturbance was less than on previous days. The next day, when I desired to continue my journey, Mr. M—— urged me to remain, saying he would feel like an orphan without someone on whom he could depend. Would I wait until the Festival was over, and then I might go.

The morning after the Festival had finished, a number of men began to block up the front door with huge slabs of stone. Mr. M—— and I went out by the back door to see what was going on. We saw four men carrying a great stone slab to block up the back door, and behind them were four more carrying another slab. Mr. M—— tried by force to stop them. But I saw a man standing about a

bowshot away to the west watching, so I said to Mr. M——: "Don't make trouble with these men; they are only working under orders." The men assented to my remark, saying: "That is so; we have been sent by His Worship Ling the Fifth." So taking Mr. M—— by the hand I said: "We must get into touch with the master-mind in this affair," and led him indoors.

In a little while a young man knocked at the back door, and after coming in said that his teacher, Mr. Ling the Fifth, who had some knowledge of medicine, was anxious to investigate the religion we taught. Would we supply him with some books? Mr. M—— promptly selected several volumes, and handed them to me to give to him. The young man then bade us adieu, and I escorted him to the front door. When we opened it, we found the way blocked. I said: "What an extraordinary thing!" The young man, pretending to know nothing, shook his head and said: "Most extraordinary!" So he had to leave by the back door, the way he had entered.

In the afternoon, the eight men who had been carrying the stones to block the doors came to say that "His Worship Ling the Fifth had sent the stones to build a stone landing-stage on our river-front, so that it might be more convenient for boats to come alongside. As the weather was very cold for working in water would we remember them?" I assured them that we would, when the work was finished. They then added that "His Worship Ling the Fifth had, in his boat, passed along the front on more than one occasion, and that he had told them that the work must be well done, and he had said that you would be sure to give us a handsome acknowledgment." So I told Mr. M—— that he ought to give the men not less than two dollars. After this I left for Anchi, and about the middle of the second moon I returned to Hangchow.

32. END OF THE HUCHOW AFFAIR

Subsequently, the official, on receipt of a dispatch from the American Consul-General, liberated the carpenter's wife. But the carpenter, who had been in hiding in Hangchow, suddenly died in the hospital. Out of compassion, Mr. M—— and I assisted his family to the sum of more than sixty dollars. As Mr. M—— said that his Board would not contribute towards such a compassionate fund, I bore as much as I could; but it was beyond my power to be responsible for all. Later on Mr. M—— gave me twenty dollars towards my travelling expenses between Hangchow and Huchow, as this was an expense his Board would meet. I received the money and used it towards the cost of putting in a wooden floor to the chapel in Hangchow; the converts and inquirers supplying the balance needed.

33. THE LORD SHUTS THE LION'S MOUTH

During the third moon I went to Tsiang-kia-wu to hold a conference. Sometime before this the Yamen runners had seized the ringleader Yü, mentioned in a previous chapter, but on receiving a bribe had released him again. One day during the conference, as I was sitting at table in company with some of the converts, this man suddenly entered the house by a side-door, and saluting me with raised hands, addressed me in a loud voice. I responded by requesting him to be seated. He immediately sat down by my side.

I then asked one of the converts to bring me a Bible, saying: "We will have morning prayers according to our custom." With a believing hand I opened the Bible at the Second Book of Corinthians, chapter x., and read

from verse 1 to verse 10, the passage beginning: "Now I Paul myself intreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who in your presence am lowly among you," etc. Making verses 3-5 the subject of my discourse, I spoke about the uncarnal weapons of the Christian soldier, and then led in prayer. When I had finished I turned to the persecutor at my side, and lo! he was gone.

The two converts who were with me then told me that they had seen a knife in his right hand, but concealed by his long sleeve. They had spotted it when he raised his hands to salute me. They had been in great distress, and had spied upon him during the prayer, which had been so long they had nearly died from anxiety.

It was clear that through the Lord's protection, the man had not been permitted to complete the work he had set out to do. How great is the Lord's power! When the conference was over, I wrote to the district magistrate urging him to issue a proclamation offering a reward for the capture of this man, so that the runners should not yield to bribery a second time. And I exhorted the converts to respond to any proclamation which might be issued, so that this injurious person might be removed.

34. CAPTURE OF RINGLEADER YÜ

By the year 1889 there were six out-stations connected with the Chuki district, and in the second month I made a tour of inspection. Subsequently we held a conference for three days at Tsiang-kia-wu.

Now, as ringleader Yü had managed to get free by means of a bribe, he regarded this offer of a reward for his arrest as merely empty words. He waxed more lawless than ever, so that the converts and inquirers were

unable to live in peace. We therefore set ourselves, on the third day of the conference, earnestly to supplicate the Lord about it. Not many days after I had returned to Hangchow, the converts, acting in accordance with the official notice, caught their persecutor and brought him to Hangchow, where he was handed over to the Provincial Governor.

The Governor of the province appointed the Hangchow Prefect to deal with the case, and he gave orders that all the official records of the Chuki district should be brought to the capital, and that all the other members of the gang mentioned in those records should be made to appear, so that the case could be sifted to the bottom and dealt with thoroughly. From that time onward the converts and inquirers were able to dwell in peace and to enjoy their possessions.

35. MAKING FRIENDS OF ADVERSARIES

In the summer of 1889 the American Presbyterian Mission South met with a certain experience. Some two years previously, one of their missionaries, a Rev. Dr. G. W. Painter, who lived in Hangchow, travelled extensively by means of a boat among the cities and villages of the prefectures of Kashing and Huchow, and a number of converts and inquirers were gathered in various centres. But when it came to the summer of 1889 the theatrical festivities connected with the Temples of the Spirits of the Land¹ were held, and the expenses were allocated to the people.

¹ A festival somewhat akin to the Roman Terminalia, held in honour of the God Terminus, the divinity who presided over the bounds and limits of land. He was represented without feet or arms, to signify that he never moved.

The converts and inquirers, in keeping with their belief in Christ, would not promise to pay their allotted portion, and by so doing stirred up the wrath of one of the gentry named Pan. At this man's bidding all the country folk united to overawe the inquirers, who reported the matter to their Mission in Hangchow. The Rev. J. L. Stuart, having on four previous occasions attempted unsuccessfully to deal with similar matters, and knowing that freedom for carrying on the work in these districts depended upon a settlement, appointed Messrs. Seng and Chen to consult me about it.

On the 1st day of the seventh moon I set out by boat from Hangchow accompanied by these two gentlemen. On the evening of the next day these two men, armed with a proclamation from the magistrate of the Renho district and a manifesto by Prince Kung, went to the home of the scholar Pan and asked him to examine these documents. At the same time the people pressed in and filled the house.

Scholar Pan said: "Documents like these may serve their purpose elsewhere, but not here in Tehtsing. Furthermore, these theatricals have been highly esteemed by successive emperors; why should the Christian converts despise them?" In vain Messrs. Seng and Chen sought, in a friendly manner, to make their point of view plain; scholar Pan would not yield. So they returned to the boat.

On their return journey they were pursued by a crowd of country people, and were pelted with stones. After they had narrated to me all that had happened, we had a season of prayer, and then I wrote out a detailed account which, in the morning, I sent by their hands to the district magistrate.

When the district magistrate had read the document

he returned it to them, saying that he could do nothing without instructions from his superiors. On their return to me they saw Scholar Pan, heading a band of men, in the act of plundering the homes of two of the inquirers; taking away their boats, tables, and other personal belongings. I made full inquiries concerning these matters, and again we gave ourselves to prayer. After the evening meal we made another careful statement setting forth these acts of robbery.

At daybreak I gave this new document to the two men with instructions to take it to the district magistrate, and I also handed them the one returned the day before, in case it should be demanded. Things turned out as I expected. Both documents were needed. But the magistrate said the same thing, namely, that he could not take action without instructions from his superiors. We thereupon all returned to Hangchow.

We then took counsel with Mr. Stuart, and decided to present a petition to the Intendant of Circuit. I gratefully acknowledge the kindness of this official, for during a personal interview he had with the Governor of the province he handed him our petition, with the result that orders were issued that the case was to be settled without delay.

We did not expect that our persecutors would suddenly cease their oppression, so we were not surprised to hear that other inquirers had been robbed of their possessions and that some of them had been wounded. I thereupon wrote another letter to the district magistrate, saying that the matter had been placed before his superiors, and that we had been promised that action should be taken. This letter I sent by an evangelist, but the magistrate only vented his wrath upon him. When, however, he received the dispatch from the Intendant of Circuit

he was without excuse, and had resource to deceit. He told the inquirers that he intended to send for and interrogate them on the 23rd of the seventh moon. Really, he had chosen the 20th, which was a Sunday, to go in person and judge the matter in the country places.

Now happily Mr. Sang was in the neighbourhood, waiting for a reply, and by the Lord's goodness he was told by the beadle that the investigation would take place on the 20th. In consequence, therefore, of the report we received, Mr. Chen and I took boat and reached Tehtsing before noon on Saturday the 19th. But when Mr. Chen went to the Yamen, he was told that the date was the 23rd! When I heard this, I thought what a pity we have come too soon, for the hire of the boat cost one thousand cash a day. But as it was too late to change, I decided to go to Shangpeh for the Sunday, and worship in the American Baptists' Chapel there. But after we had started, I suddenly changed my mind, and decided to go back and call the persecuted together and worship with them.

Now when Mr. Sang heard from the Yamen that the date was to be the 23rd, he concluded that the beadle had given him inaccurate information. He therefore went to Hangchow to tell us, but only to find that we had gone. He returned immediately to Tehtsing, but though he searched for us could not find us. In the evening he engaged a small boat, but while he was drinking tea he noticed that the Yamen runners were impressing a number of boats. Upon making inquiries he learned that the magistrate was leaving for some public business. Before dawn next morning the magistrate with his body-guard occupying more than ten boats had arrived at Tsuenkia-tan, and the beadle ordered the local inquirers to entertain the company. Greatly alarmed, they found me,

and I sent word to the beadle that he was to do the entertaining on our behalf, and that the cost would be refunded him later.

A little later Mr. Sang arrived, and we had a season of earnest and heart-searching prayer. We then decided that I should stay and conduct the services, while Messrs. Sang and Chen should go alternately to the Temple where the Court was to sit and take careful notes of all that transpired, so as to keep me accurately informed.

That day more than a thousand boats arrived with several thousand spectators to witness the proceedings of the Court. When the proceedings opened, Scholar Pan appeared in full dress wearing his official button.¹ He simply bowed to the magistrate, but the converts and inquirers had to go down on hands and knees before the judgment seat. At first the magistrate frowned angrily upon the converts, and roundly scolded them, striking the table. But his private secretary told him that careful notes were being made of all that transpired. The result was that in the afternoon the magistrate's speech and deportment changed. He ordered Scholar Pan to kneel as the converts had, and then he commanded him to restore the goods he had taken, while he spoke more kindly to the converts, and advised them to make a peaceable settlement.

When the magistrate was about to return to his boat, an aged mother who had been severely beaten and injured went down upon her hands and knees and begged that her wounds might be examined, but the official, knowing full well that to begin to investigate the wounding of an aged and revered person would seriously

¹ The various coloured buttons worn on the official hat indicate the wearer's rank.—ED.

implicate Scholar Pan and invest the legal proceedings with a new and grave complexion, refused to do so. Thereupon she and several other women fell down and clasped the magistrate's feet. With a promise that the woman's wounds should be examined after he had had some rest on his boat, he went on board, but immediately raised anchor and returned to the city.

We three men then had a season of prayer until past midnight, when it was decided that I, with a show of great consequence, should take boat to Huchow, while they two went to the magistrate to ask how the matter was to be settled. They were informed that the Yamen runners had already received instructions to arrest the defendants, and that the matter could be settled to our liking.

Scholar Pan, now recognising that he would be made responsible, asked for a reconciliation. As all the boats, furniture, and other personal effects had been restored, we readily assented, but asked him for a written statement. But fearing that some bitterness might be left to bear evil fruit in days to come, I urged the converts to prepare a feast in Mr. Pan's honour, and to ask him to invite his own guests. The converts and inquirers were to make a bow to Scholar Pan, and with a kind demeanour and conciliatory language were to express their regret for what had happened. Thus honouring him they would heap coals of fire upon his head. Scholar Pan was deeply affected, even to tears. Thus was an enemy changed into a friend. Furthermore, I exhorted the converts to be humble and meek in all their dealings with Scholar Pan, hoping that he too might turn to the Lord.

The fruit of this was seen in later years. When during the Boxer persecutions of 1900, evil persons desired to provoke persecution against the Church, Scholar Pan

intervened. He stated that friendly relations had prevailed between the Christians and the people, and thus through his goodwill all opposition was brought to naught. At the present time the American Presbyterian Mission South have a flourishing work in this part of the province of Chekiang.

36. THE FULFILMENT OF A DREAM

During the tenth moon I went to Huchow and heard that, in consequence of instructions sent by the Hangchow Prefect, the district magistrate had dispatched ten runners to arrest a certain witness in connection with the case of ringleader Yü. When I retired to rest I knew that this witness was in hiding. After waking in the morning I fell asleep again, and in my sleep I saw a fire suddenly break out close to me, so that my back seemed scorched. I hastened to escape, and when I examined myself I found I had not been hurt. Then I awoke, and knew that it was a dream. After pondering upon the dream for some time, I concluded there was nothing in it, and so disregarded it.

But on the Friday evening, just as we had finished worship, a man came in to say that the mother of the witness sought for had swallowed opium, could we give him some antidote? Mr. Chang immediately arose to fetch some. I asked him what he purposed to fetch, and he said, sulphate of zinc. I said in reply that though that medicine caused vomiting, there were other emetics, mentioning pulverised mustard seeds with plenty of lukewarm water, or soapy water, etc. I told all this to the messenger who had come, and told him to act accordingly. I then told Mr. Chang what the consequences would have been had he gone himself.

A little later, the messenger returned to say that the woman had died. After this man came another to say that the woman had died after having vomited the opium. I then expressed my regret if she really were dead, for she used to come to hear the Gospel. Furthermore, I said her action was very short-sighted, for her son had only been arraigned as a witness, and that we had made no accusation against him. It was probable that ringleader Yü had made a deposition and implicated him. I had come with no knowledge of the magistrate's instructions to his runners, so that the woman's death had nothing to do with us.

In the morning we heard it was reported that the woman was not dead. I then said that I was leaving for a baptismal service, and the Lord's Supper in another place. I was told that as the place to which I was going was less than two miles away, I need not leave until the morning. I then replied: "According to the dream I have had, I feel certain that the woman will die, and there will be trouble. It is best for me to withdraw at once." I then related the dream, and my immediate withdrawal was approved.

37. A MISTAKE THROUGH WINE DRINKING

Just at that time, one of the converts who had killed a chicken invited me to dinner. I at first refused, but under pressure yielded. Owing to my mental preoccupation I partook of more wine than was good for me, and being tired I fell asleep. At about three o'clock in the afternoon, the leading men of all the surrounding villages gathered together and came upstairs to the room where I was, while many others were down below. The sound of the many voices awoke me, and I at once explained the case of the ringleader Yü. I also added: "In regard to

the witness who is being sought, it is only necessary for him to go to Hangchow to attest the facts. The crime belongs to ringleader Yü alone. Why should the mother of the witness be so short-sighted?" Unitedly they asked: "Is it not possible to effect a reconciliation?" To this I replied: "The leading principle of the Christian religion is peace; what is there that stands in the way of reconciliation?" They all acclaimed this as excellent and departed.

Almost immediately I was informed that the leading men, together with the heads of the Chang and the Yü Clans had left the village in their sedan-chairs, and that all the entrances and exits to and from the village were being held. There was no way of escape, and the situation was one of no little danger. I said: "Bid all the converts assemble here to-night. Prayer now is our only resort."

Very soon another messenger brought the news that the murderer Yü, with his gang, had entered the village, and that as the family of the man wanted as a witness were killing pigs, and had bought a load of bean-curd, it was evident that trouble was anticipated that evening.

When evening prayers were over, Mr. Chang Fu-tseo and I went upstairs to bed, his bed being opposite mine. He snored all night long, while the dogs of the village barked incessantly. As the barking of the dogs was ominous of trouble I rose and gave myself to prayer, saying: "O Lord, Thou didst reveal to me in a dream, by the danger of fire, that I should depart. I ought not to have delayed to dine with a convert, much less should I have partaken of so much wine. The sin of disobedience cannot be denied. If I receive injury, I shall have brought it upon myself. Even death itself would not merit pity. But the highest interests of the Church are at stake, and these are of the greatest importance. May the Lord have mercy upon us and forgive me."

Knowing from the barking of the dogs that something serious was taking place, I prayed the more earnestly, like Jacob at Penue!l, when he was afraid of Esau. And under the Lord's protecting care the night passed without incident.

38. DELIVERED FROM THE TIGER'S DEN

When I awakened at dawn, I requested that the converts be called that we might have worship before I set out for Tsiang-kia-wu. Mr. Chang, who had shared my room, urged me not to leave, saying that I should be safe where I was. I replied: "Why are you so ignorant? You know nothing but to lean on me. Do you not know Him in whom I trust, and to whom I have prayed all night long?"

At the same time a convert called, and said that he had just met a man who said he had been talking to and drinking tea with the woman who had swallowed opium, so that she was not dead as had been reported. Though I heard these words I paid no heed to them.

Generally during worship the windows of the houses opposite were closed, but on this day no sooner did we start to sing than all the windows were opened, and we were kept under close observation. I knew full well that there was some sufficient reason for this. When worship was concluded, I gathered the Communion service, the Bibles, and the hymn-books together, and made ready to start. Two men who had been outside the front door watching asked me if I were going to Tsiang-kia-wu or not. I replied: "Yes." They then asked: "Will you return to-day?" To this I answered: "My bedding and luggage will be left here. I do not appreciate using other people's bedding, and I ought to return. But to-day there will be

a large conference at Tsiang-kia-wu, and there will be many things demanding attention. It is possible I may not come back." Thereupon I started.

As I passed through the village, I could see that I was the subject of close attention as though I were a stranger, and from this I knew still more certainly that there was some special cause. As I walked I prayed, and safely reached Tsiang-kia-wu without molestation and without being pursued.

As soon as I had arrived we had worship, and the on-lookers were more numerous than usual. When the afternoon service was concluded, Mr. Chang said in presence of the crowd: "That convert's mother is not dead. I have heard it confirmed in this village." I replied: "Why are you so stupid? What has it to do with us whether she be alive or dead?" Mr. Chang then urged me to return with him to Shih-mu-wu, but I took no notice.

At that time theatricals were being held in the village where we were, and during the interval between the performances the son-in-law of one of the converts, though not himself then a believer, came to me upstairs and in secret gave me some news. He said: "The convert's mother is dead, and they have covered her corpse with sand. Her people are in league with the Yamen runners, and they have charged you and your companion with the crime of having driven her to suicide. The district magistrate has already petitioned the Prefect to make an investigation." As soon as the man had told me this he hurriedly departed.

Immediately I gave myself to prayer, after which I appointed a convert to go to a neighbouring village, and arrange that a sedan-chair should be waiting for me in the morning. I said I would pay the men daily, and decide as we travelled what route I desired to go. I also

deputed another convert to fetch the luggage I had left behind, and he was to meet me at the village named on the following morning.

Next morning, before dawn, I set off for the appointed village, and as I reached it my luggage also arrived. I at once gave orders to the chair-bearers to take me to a certain village three or four miles away, and just before we reached it, at a place where the road forked, I gave fresh instructions. And when this new destination was reached, I gave other directions until we reached a village in the Fuyang district. I then discharged the bearers, and told them to let the converts know where I was.

39. A MURDEROUS ATTEMPT FOILED

On the next day but one, a certain convert came and told me that on Saturday evening a number of hired desperadoes had arrived at the home of the dead woman and had drunk several gallons of wine. They had frequently purposed to rise and seize me, but some objection or other had been made, such as: "That man Ren is a smart fellow; we must be careful or we shall fall into some ambush." Thus were they frustrated all night, and dared not take any definite step. On the Monday there had been ten armed men sent to Tsiang-kia-wu, but finding that I had left they attempted to follow me, but owing to the way I had changed my directions they lost heart and returned.

I told this convert to return and tell the other converts where I was, and that there was no need for them to be anxious. For the next three days, as I had opportunity, I went to the surrounding villages preaching the Word. Then, desiring to be nearer to the converts, I moved to the home of a church member living on the

other side of a mountain pass from Tsiang-kia-wu. As communications between these two places was easy, I could be kept in touch with developments.

As my host told me that the inquest was to be held on the following day, and that some tens of Yamen runners had begun to make preparations, I sent a letter to the converts at Tsiang-kia-wu telling them to come to me for consultation.

After the evening meal a man arrived to tell me that the magistrate's underlings were compelling the converts to provide the place for the inquest and to bear the expenses of entertainment. I told the man to return and say: "Whatever expenses are demanded pay in full, but be sure to demand a receipt; or else ask the official beadle to be responsible, so that it can be settled later. Give what ought to be given, and tell the magistrate's underlings that I am here." [The underlings then would be afraid to be extortionate.]

Unbeknown to me then there was a spy outside taking note of all that happened. Having discovered this, I told my host not to unroll my bedding, as I purposed moving to the home of another convert less than two miles away. Sending word to the converts as to my change of abode, I waited till midnight, and after the spy had departed, I moved under cover of the darkness as I had planned. It was not long ere all the converts arrived, and we gave ourselves unitedly to prayer, and then to consultation. At daybreak I crossed the mountain and returned to Hangchow by boat.

40. PRAYER ANSWERED

The next day I reached Hangchow. In the evening I prepared a report which was handed into the offices of

the Provincial Governor, the Provincial Judge, and the Prefect of Hangchow. But unbeknown to me, the Prefect of Shaohing, who was an habitual persecutor of the Church, had told the magistrate who was holding the inquest to seize six of the converts [the names are given], and have them handed over to the Chuki magistrate to be cast into prison. His report had been handed in on Sunday night, before mine. The consequence was that the Provincial Judge had already given instructions that all these converts were to be examined with the full rigours of the law. As I knew that this meant that these six converts would be cross-examined under flogging with the bamboo, I could only give myself to prayer.

Sending word to Mr. Chang Fu-tseo to come to Hangchow, so that he might avoid being seized, I engaged a small boat to take me to Anchi, my object being to secure a time for undisturbed prayer. As I thought of those six converts innocently suffering I could not sleep at night. After reading four or five Psalms, and affectionately committing them to God's care, my heart would be more at rest, and I would blow out the light and lie down to sleep. But in a short time I was awake again, to read and pray again as before. This was repeated five or six times a night.

When I reached Huchow I went to see my friend Mr. M——, who was living inside the East Gate. He said to me: "When I was in difficulties you helped me. Now, friend, that you are in trouble I am willing to help you to the utmost of my ability." I replied: "There is only one thing for which I ask." He said: "Is that prayer?" I said: "Yes." Then said he: "I will without fail pray daily for what you desire."

Taking leave of him I proceeded to Anchi, where I remained many days for prayer. Then hiring another

boat I began the return journey praying as before. Upon my arrival at Hangchow I heard that the Chuki magistrate had repeatedly summoned the converts to appear, but that judgment had not yet been given. All the false witnesses engaged had been found useless. Then I knew that prayer was efficacious.

As I thought upon my dream, and how the Lord had warned me to escape, and yet of how I had disobeyed and delayed until I was involved in danger, and yet of the way in which I had been delivered out of the tiger's den, I recalled the story, recorded in the thirteenth chapter of First Kings, of how the disobedient prophet had been crunched to death by a lion. Opening my Bible I read the story until my hair stood on end and my flesh began to creep. Alas! alas! that I should have acted as I did. But God's grace had been greater to me than to that prophet! I had been spared.

41. A CLEAR JUDGMENT¹

Early in 1890, the district magistrate of Chuki sent the six prisoners to the Hangchow Prefect. The Prefect decided that he himself, with twelve judiciary commissioners, would try the case. I thereupon invited Chinese representatives² of three American and two British missionary societies to go to the prefectural Yamen, and watch the case for me.

Two of the district magistrate's underlings were tried

¹ The Chinese title is literally *Distinguishing the Rivers King and Wei*. The King River, which rises in Kansu, has very clear water. The Wei River also rises in Kansu, but it is famous for its turbid waters. These two rivers, after flowing some hundreds of miles separately, unite near Sian, and pour into the Yellow River. This geographical fact has given rise to several literary expressions. To distinguish between the Rivers King and Wei is a figurative expression for seeing the rights and wrongs of a matter.—ED.

² The names of the men and of the societies are all given.

first. They were asked whether, when they went to arrest convert Yü, any of the other ten converts had accompanied them to cause intimidation or not? They asserted that the converts had gone with them, but that they had not attempted any intimidation. They were further questioned as to how it was that the convert's mother had committed suicide if the converts had not browbeaten her. The underlings tried to evade this question by saying they did not know. This angered the Prefect, who had the two men put upon the rack.¹

Then the converts were subjected to examination. They were asked: "Did you go with the underlings or not?" They replied: "No, we did not." They were then asked: "How is it then that the underlings say you did?" They replied: "They have given false evidence." The Prefect then exclaimed: "And are you also waiting to be placed upon the rack?" To this they replied: "In truth, we did not go with them. We are willing to be cross-examined by them." To this the Prefect, assented.

The converts then asked the underlings: "When did we go with you?" They made no reply. The Prefect then said to the converts: "If you had not resorted to intimidation, why should this woman have committed suicide?" To this they replied: "Because she wanted to involve us in trouble, and to conceal the truth concerning the previous law-suit." But the Prefect said: "You cannot be without fault. Although there is a difference between committing suicide with opium, and with some other poison, you must draw up and sign a deposition acknowledging some share of responsibility; otherwise there will have to be a fresh examination." But the converts would not consent to this. On the other hand the Prefect's opinion was that unless they did sign such a

¹ Literally, the Scales of Heaven!

deposition, there was nothing for it but for him to bring pressure to bear upon them.

At this juncture, one of those who were watching the case for me hurriedly sent me a messenger, and I moved to a room over an engraver's shop facing the prefectural Yamen. I then called for one of my representatives so that I might learn all that had transpired. He told me that he did not think the case could be settled unless the deposition was signed. I replied: "The burden of my prayer for five years has been that God may have all the glory. I have not asked for anything else. To sign such a deposition now would make five years of prayer altogether void. I will not believe this necessary. We ought not to sign any such document." To this he said: "But orders to that effect have gone forth from the mouths of all the thirteen officials. How can that be stultified? Only God could make each one of them suddenly ill, or cause the Governor of the province to summons them all into his presence. Only thus can this command be avoided."

To all this I said: "How can it be that God has no means for answering my prayer? You must tell the converts to follow my instructions." Perceiving my obstinacy, he went away with a sigh, while I continued in silent prayer.

In a little while another of my representatives came to say: "Pressure is being put upon us, and there is no escape from signing a deposition." But as before I would not consent.

Towards evening the officials withdrew for a little rest, but after the evening meal the candles were lighted to resume the trial. Again I was asked: "What is to be done?" I replied: "On no account must a deposition be signed." A little later all the converts appeared and said: "In very truth, the matter has been ordered for

you." And then they related how after all the officials had taken their seats, the Prefect wrote an order announcing: "We shall try this case again to-morrow."

Thereupon we all returned home, and gathered together for a thanksgiving service. We also drew up a petition to the Prefect beseeching him to make clear the difference between right and wrong, but that should no distinction be made between the water of the Rivers King and Wei, we still could not sign a deposition acknowledging what was false. But we added, that if a just judgment were given, and he desired to deal leniently with the offence of convert Yü, we, being ourselves recipients of the mercy of Christ, had nothing to say against that.

In the afternoon of the next day the trial was resumed. The offence of convert Yü was first dealt with, and he was rebuked with the utmost severity. Convert Yü hung his head and acknowledged his fault, and was let off lightly without being flogged. After this ring-leader Yü was brought forward. He was condemned to be publicly beaten with rods, and then to be kept in custody in his own neighbourhood. Thus blessed by the Lord's protection this matter was sifted to the bottom and our case made as clear as a crystal stream.

42. A SERIOUS ILLNESS¹

In the late spring of 1890, the Misses Guinness and Littler arrived in Hangchow from Shanghai. After checking their luggage I became so ill that I could not move, and through my illness they were hindered for

¹ For some reason Pastor Ren calls this one chapter, Chapters xlii. and xliii., and gives it two titles. As the narrative is unbroken we regard it as one chapter, so that hereafter our chapter number will differ from the original.

more than twenty days from proceeding on their journey into Kiangsi. Dr. Hickin came twice a day to see me, and regarded my case as serious, and for a time I thought I was about to die. As I thought of the Church I wondered how it could possibly be carried on without me; and as I thought of my family I did not know how they could be provided for apart from me. I could not refrain from being exceedingly sorrowful. But as I reflected on the situation I rebuked myself, saying: "Why do you value yourself so highly? Has the Lord's Church only you to depend upon? Is there no one better than you? Even a man with little or no ability, if filled with the Spirit, would become an extraordinary man. It is only because you have been bathed in the Lord's grace and favour that you have been able, in the slightest degree, to discharge your duties as a pastor. The Lord is not dependent upon you; but it is rather you who are utterly dependent upon the Lord. Now that the Lord is taking you from this world, He certainly has something better in store for you." In this confidence I desired to see the Lord's glorious face. With regard to my family matters, was there not the word in the Psalms?—"A Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in His holy habitation." Was not that sufficient to remove anxiety?

Thereupon I gave myself silently to prayer, committing the affairs of the Church and of my family into God's hands. My heart was at rest, and from that time my health began unexpectedly to improve. The Misses Guinness and Littler were now less anxious about me and proceeded to Kiangsi. But the doctor was not happy that I should remain in my own home, so he had me removed to hospital. All my food was brought me from the doctor's kitchen, and a special nurse was appointed to attend to my needs.

The doctor a little later consulted Bishop Moule, to see if I could not get a change to the hills, and Bishop Moule at once wrote to some of the missionaries of my own Mission at Chiüchow; but just as matters had been arranged an epidemic broke out there and that plan had to be abandoned. Other plans were suggested, but as Bishop Moule was himself going to Shanghai he urged me to accompany him. After prayer I decided to go with him, and reached there in comfort.

It was well into the summer when Bishop Moule escorted me to Shanghai, and just as I was being lifted on to my bed the old symptoms returned. Dr. J. C. Stewart, of my own Mission, attended me, but though he changed my medicine it was with no avail.

At that time the Chinese pastor of the American Presbyterian Press, in the kindness of his heart, visited me daily, and he asked Dr. S. A. D. Hunter, who was just then putting a book on *Therapeutics and Pharmacopoeia* through the Press, to see me. Mr. J. W. Stevenson was delighted when he heard this, but I said: "According to foreign etiquette, it is not becoming for a patient to change his own doctor." Mr. Stevenson said: "There is no objection to you doing so." But I replied: "It will be better not to change."

At that time Dr. Howard Taylor, Mr. Hudson Taylor's second son, happened to be passing through Shanghai on his way from Honan to Chefoo, and Mr. Stevenson asked him to see me. According to his diagnosis my sickness was very serious, and he did not think that I should live more than a week. Unfortunately he had sent all his luggage, including his medical outfit, on to Chefoo, so he urged Mr. Stevenson to have me removed quickly to the General Hospital.

Now it happened that this hospital did not admit

Chinese patients, but after repeated visits, and urgent representations by Mr. Stevenson, they consented to receive me. Mr. Stevenson returned very pleased, but I refused because it was to cost five dollars a day! But Mr. Stevenson said: "Don't let that trouble you. You have been a self-supporting pastor for many years; the Mission will bear that expense." To this I replied: "I do not consider the Mission less than I consider myself. If I were to stay for three months in that hospital, it would cost four hundred and fifty dollars. I could not endure that the Mission should be at such an expense on my behalf." Mr. Stevenson replied: "Although it is a large sum, that has nothing to do with you." But I firmly refused to be persuaded.

Mr. Stevenson then asked me: "Under what conditions will you agree to go?" I said: "If the charges are reasonable, I will go." Mr. Stevenson then went to St. Luke's Hospital, and after consultation with the authorities returned and said: "I have obtained a bed where the charges are reasonable; there will be a private room for you and milk diet." I asked what the charges were. They were two dollars a day, and thinking that that was an imposition I still declined.¹ Mr. Stevenson said: "But whether the expenses are much or little has really nothing to do with you." But I was not willing that the Mission should incur such extravagance on my behalf, and though Mr. Stevenson urged me again and again I would not hear of it.

Mr. Stevenson was much distressed, and said: "Dr. Taylor must leave for Chefoo to-morrow, and from what he says your malady is serious. What can be done? For

¹ The most moderate charges in the foreign settlement would to the Chinese, accustomed to up-country prices, appear extortionate. —ED.

you may not live another week." I replied: "The will of the Lord be done." Mr. Stevenson was much upset [literally scorched with grief] that he could do nothing. Who could have known that the Lord, in His unfathomable grace, would cause Dr. Howard Taylor's temperature to go up that night to 104!¹ And the next morning it rose to 105, so that the celebrated physician, Dr. L. S. Little, was hurriedly sent for; and he was cured immediately. Thereupon Dr. Howard Taylor asked Dr. Little to see me.

In the afternoon Dr. Little returned, and inserting an instrument into the lung from the back, drew off a small quantity of fluid. After examining this he arranged for an operation the next day. When I was carried to the operating-table, and was about to receive the anaesthetic, I said: "Please delay a moment while I prepare, so that if I do not come to again, it will not matter." I then committed my soul to the Lord Jesus, and then said: "Now proceed." I did not awake until I was back in my bed, and then I was astonished at the large quantity of fluid which had been taken from my lungs. Because of my condition Dr. Howard Taylor delayed his journey to Chefoo, and it was not until the close of the eighth moon that I was better, and he sailed. I returned to Hangchow on the fourth day of the eighth moon.

My illness had been uncommon, but baptised with rare and exceeding grace I was raised up as though from the dead. Most certainly I ought to render the deepest gratitude to God for all His boundless mercy toward me. And I am grateful likewise to Mr. Stevenson, to Dr. Howard Taylor, to Miss Ming, and to Mr. Armstrong for their ceaseless nursing night and day. I also highly value

¹ We should like to see Dr. Howard Taylor when he reads this! Two dollars a day was an extravagance, but——ED.

the prayers of the many who took an interest in my concerns. I shall remember with gratitude and not forget.

43. I DETERMINE TO TAKE NO WINE

On the 18th day of the ninth moon I went to Shih-mu-wu, in the Chuki district to conduct some wedding ceremonies. From my youth I had been fond of wine, yet only in moderation, but ever since the trouble connected with the convert Yü I had determined to abstain. For this reason at all the various weddings in the Chuki district at that time I drank no wine.

From Chuki I returned to Tzelang, and because of the troubles during the previous year over convert Yü I preached the Word there for three days. As a result there were people constantly going to Chuki or Hangchow to hear more. Under these circumstances I could not but go, and as soon as I reached Tzelang several tens of people assembled together. I therefore stayed there some days, and after visiting other places I returned to Hangchow.

44. LAYING FOUNDATIONS AT LINAN

In the Spring of 1891 I went to Linan. The reason for this was that a certain convert, named Cheo Hai-lin, had told me that several families, all converts, had moved there from other places. They had noticed that there were uncultivated fields, and uninhabited houses there, and they planned to break this unused ground and settle there.¹ But because they would not contribute to

¹ After the Taiping Rebellion there were many farms and buildings without owners.—ED.

the theatricals connected with the Temple of the Spirits of the Land, they had been driven away by the local inhabitants. They therefore had asked me to go and see if a settlement could be arranged. I had promised to do so after the trouble at Chuki was settled.

It was in consequence of this promise that convert Cheo came to me; but just as I was about to go I was laid aside by the serious sickness recently mentioned. I resolved, however, that if I was restored I would go as soon as possible. I had been given to understand that the district magistrate had granted permission for the converts to cultivate a certain plot of waste land. But later, a certain scholar, named T'ung, had been opposed to their doing so, and had petitioned the magistrate against it. This latter fact I only ascertained after reaching Linan.

At the service on Sunday there were about ten persons present, and I read the twenty-third chapter of Genesis, and spoke to them about Abraham buying a site for the burial of Sarah, his wife, among the people of Heth. Abraham desired a portion of Ephron's field because the cave of Machpelah was there. Ephron offered it as a gift, but Abraham modestly asked to be allowed to pay for it, and only when he had paid the price Ephron suggested did he bury his wife. Now Abraham's management of affairs was brilliant, and an admirable example for those who like ourselves were as guests among a strange people. We ought not to contend with scholar T'ung. At that service there were three unbelievers present, and they were influenced by what I said, and subsequently turned to the Lord.

At the afternoon service I read the twelfth chapter of Genesis, and taking the seventh and eighth verses as my text, I spoke of the way in which Abraham built an altar

wherever he pitched his tent, but how Lot his nephew—see the eighteenth chapter—pitched his tent towards Sodom, and built no altar. Then making a straight application of these truths I said: "It is now some five or six years since you came into these parts. You first went to Heng-t'uan, where there was the best vacant land in Linan, but you were not able to get a footing there. You then went to K'ing-sien, where there was much good land, but you could not secure a footing there. Now, although you were driven out because you would not pay the temple taxes, in the last resort it was because you had not learnt to worship God, as Abraham had done. You must regard Mr. Cheo's home as your place of worship, and you must not fail in your assembling together."

On the next day I invited the landlords of the houses occupied by these converts to meet me, and we drew up deeds of rental, in which the fees named were to be inclusive. I also asked the village secretary to come and see me, and I informed him that H.E. Tso Tsung-t'ang, the Provincial Governor, had memorialised the Throne, and had received the Imperial decision concerning the regulations to govern the acquisition of land left neglected and fallow in consequence of the Taiping Rebellion. From this time the converts enjoyed a peaceful residence and a right to their property. These were the converts who laid the foundations of the Christian Church in Linan.

45. BUILDING A CHAPEL AT CHUKI

Because whenever there was a conference at Tsiang-kia-wu the accommodation was insufficient, I went there in the ninth month and suggested the enlargement of

their borders. I selected and bought a plot of land in the village, and this, together with an additional piece of land which was given, made a good site. We then commenced to collect funds for the purchase of the necessary materials with the purpose of building during the following year.

46. OPENING A CHAPEL IN TSEHCH'I

Early in 1892 I went to Tsehch'i to repair and open the building which I had rented during the previous year, and I appointed convert Chang Fu-tseo to take charge. I also availed myself of this opportunity to visit the city and neighbourhood of Sincheng, to arrange for several local places of worship.

47. OPENING A DOOR IN KASHING

In the spring of 1892 three Chinese Christians came with an official letter from the American Presbyterian Mission South to consult me about the opening of Kashing. Like Huchow, this city had closed its doors against the Gospel. The Rev. W. D. King of the American Baptist Mission, and the Rev. S. Dodd with the Rev. Mr. Chang of the American Presbyterian Mission North, had all at different times been expelled by the officials and gentry. Later, the American Presbyterian Mission South attempted to open the market town of Sincheng, some three or four miles from the city, with a view to entering the city eventually. Early in 1892 they opened a school here, but nine of the gentry, so soon as they discovered that Christian books were being used, rushed into the school, destroyed the books, vilified the holy

religion, and compelled the landlord to return the rent and cancel the agreement.

As that Mission desired peace, they were about to return to Hangchow, when Mr. Sang, and those with him, rushed in and said: "Does not the proverb say, 'The dead horse is physician to the living one?'"¹ We ought to arrange some plan to maintain the school." Mr. Price replied: "How do you propose to do that?" Mr. Sang answered: "Of all the difficult places to open to the Gospel, Huchow was the most difficult. But through the assistance of Pastor Ren that place has been opened for some years. Why not consult Pastor Ren?" Thereupon they decided to do so.

In answer to the letter which I received on this question I replied: "My great desire is to break new ground. But before we proceed further in this matter there are two points to be settled. The missionaries must send me a joint letter giving me full and free authority to act in all ways as I think best. And, secondly, they must ask the American Consul to give me a dispatch to the Prefect of Kashing, the wording of the dispatch and the time of delivery to be arranged by myself." To this Mr. P. F. Price and Mr. J. L. Stuart agreed, but Mr. Painter was opposed.

At this juncture Mr. Price was about to marry, and he invited the Hon. John Fowler, the American Consul at Ningpo, to come to Hangchow to officiate at his wedding. Availing themselves of this opportunity, the matter was put before Consul Fowler, and he magnanimously agreed to it. Mr. Sang therefore brought me a joint letter of approval from Messrs. Price and Stuart, together with a written statement as to Consul Fowler's

¹ Probably meaning that there is a way out of an impossible situation.

willingness. I thereupon made a draft of the dispatch for Consul Fowler to approve, copy, and seal. Furnished with this, and with the characters for GOSPEL HALL written in large type, I proceeded to Sincheng, while it was agreed that Mr. Price should follow later, but anchor his boat some three or four miles away and await developments.

On the 28th of the month I delivered the dispatch at the Prefect's Yamen of Kashing. The gist of the dispatch stated that: "Missionaries had been repeatedly persecuted and expelled from Kashing by the literati and the people. That this very year they had been opposed, at the market town of Sincheng, when they opened a school, by nine of the literati who had destroyed the books and maligned the religion. That a missionary proposed to open a Gospel Hall on the 29th of the present month—the next day—and protection was desired."

After midnight of the 28th, we pasted the large characters for GOSPEL HALL on the lintel of the door, and early in the morning opened the hall, and began to preach the Word.

It so happened that a Mr. Dyer of the British and Foreign Bible Society, with a Mr. Luh, were in the place selling scriptures. I sent for Mr. Price, and also invited Mr. Dyer and his companion to come to the hall. It could not be otherwise than that the whole market-town would be perturbed, but happily there was no trouble that day.

The next day was the Lord's Day, and we opened the hall for worship. At about nine o'clock the District Magistrate Liu came in his steam-launch, escorted by eight river gunboats, and going to the Foundling Hospital had an interview with the leading gentry. He also sent his card to the hall to say that he would shortly be

passing, and would make a call. To this I replied: "Today is Sunday, and worship will be proceeding during the morning; but we shall await instructions after four o'clock in the afternoon." But the Mandarin did not come.

It was subsequently rumoured that he had said to the gentry: "It is too late now to do anything. You made no move, and now the Prefect has been petitioned to preserve order. The heaviest responsibility now rests upon me." Having said this he boarded his launch and returned. Day by day we opened the hall and experienced no trouble. This was due to the fact that the prefectural examinations were then in progress, and all the students were engaged.

Once again I drafted a dispatch, indicating that there had been no trouble between the converts and the people while the students were busy with the examinations, and requesting the Prefect to instruct the district magistrate, to issue a proclamation guaranteeing protection for the future. This was sent to Consul Fowler, and when stamped with the official seal was handed in to the Prefect's Yamen as before.

A few days later we found a house which had an upper story, situated near the Neng Ren Monastery. I asked the owner to mortgage it to us, seeing that all had now been quiet for some days. He consented, and the necessary deed was drawn up and the mortgage affected. I waited until this business was finished and then returned to Hangchow.

48. IN PERIL BY RIVER

Toward the close of the fifth month it was time to undertake evangelistic work at Tsehch'i. Accompanied

by convert Kin, I engaged passages on a day-boat as far as Yikiao, where we were to change into another boat to proceed to our destination. There had been heavy rains for several days, and the river was in flood, so that the second boat which arrived at Yikiao at midnight could not get alongside the landing-stage. In consequence I had to hire a small boat to take me out towards the boat which was anchored in mid-stream. But owing to the *Likin* barrier being between my small ferry-boat and the passenger boat, I had to walk along a sloping plank for a distance of more than ten feet.

It was dark and raining heavily at the time. When I had traversed about half the distance, I missed my footing and fell, but the boatman who had hold of four fingers of my left hand managed to throw me on board, exclaiming: "You have frightened me out of my wits; but you are as light as a chicken." As for myself, I sat down in one of the boat's compartments with fixed eyes and an idiotic expression for the next hour or two, quite unable to speak. I was both frightened and joyful. The more I thought about it, the more wonderful it seemed. It was a pitch-black night, and if I had fallen into the water I should have been carried down into the sea by the deep swift current, and have found my grave in a fish's belly. How was it that the boatman, holding only four fingers, was able to throw me four or five feet into the boat? But for the Lord's help it would have been impossible.

49. MY SECOND SON'S SERIOUS ILLNESS

In the ninth month I went to Linan to mortgage a house, in the village of Suen-kia-t'eo, to be used as a place of worship and was detained there some time. As

my second son *T'ien Hwa*¹ suddenly contracted a serious illness, a messenger came to urge me to return to Hangchow, which I did. I had my son removed to the hospital, and arranged for two nurses to wait upon him day and night. By the eleventh moon his condition was much worse, and gave rise to grave anxiety.

Just at this time, we learned that the house which I had mortgaged for the American Presbyterian Mission South in Sincheng was up for sale, and I was asked by Mr. Price to buy it for them. To this I consented. But Pastor Wang said to me: "As your son is so seriously ill you ought not thus to engage yourself." To this I replied: "When the house was mortgaged all the arrangements passed through my hands, and now that it is about to be sold I ought to be there. If this business can be concluded earlier by one day, it means the establishment of the Church in Sincheng earlier by one day, and that will be a step towards establishing the Church in the city of Kashing. Which is the more weighty matter: one's children or the Church? Besides I have had my son removed to hospital where he is well looked after. Parental responsibility is thus fulfilled. If his sickness is unto death, my remaining here will not hasten his recovery. I rejoice to see him alive, but I could not bear to watch him die." Having said this I handed Pastor Wang five dollars, saying: "That will suffice to buy a coffin for a lad of twelve years, should it be necessary." On hearing this Pastor Wang became silent and thoughtful.

In the afternoon I went to the hospital to see how my son was. The other patients in the same ward said: "Your

¹ *T'ien* means heaven, and *Hwa* means change or transformation. *Hwa* is used of nature's operations, and of Buddhist metempsychosis. Lifted by a Christian significance, *T'ien Hwa* is literally *Heaven-Transformed*. It well illustrates the Chinese choice of names.

son *T'ien Hwa* does not stop praying though so seriously ill. Such a thing is unusual. Now that you yourself see how ill he is, you will recognise that you ought not to go away just now." To them I gave the same reply as I had given to Pastor Wang, and they too became silent and thoughtful.

I then took boat and went to Sincheng, where I stayed until the deed of purchase had been executed. When all was completed I returned to Hangchow, to find that my son's illness, by God's mercy, had taken a favourable turn, so that in due time he made a good recovery.

50. BEGINNINGS AT FUYANG

In 1893, a Mrs. Ts'ien, a convert in Shaohing, desired to sell some land which her husband had bought many years before. This land, extending to about twelve English acres in extent, only brought her in from twenty to thirty dollars a year, when all the taxes had been paid. She, therefore, asked me to go to Hwang-lu-t'eo, in the northern part of Fuyang, and try and dispose of this land to the man from whom her husband had bought it. But the man could not afford to buy. As the woman was urgently in need of the money, I bought it from her for the sum of four hundred dollars, and in the following year appointed two converts to till the land and sow the seed. By the grace of God the foundations of a Christian Church began in this place in consequence of this transaction.

51. HELPING THE WESTERNER

In 1894 the Executive of the China Inland Mission in Shanghai appointed Mr. Beckman and others, a company of seven persons, from the two countries of Sweden and

Denmark,¹ to occupy some of the Mission's stations in Chekiang where no foreigners were in residence that they might gain experience. As I considered that the premises at Tsehch'i were spacious I consented to Mr. C. Madsen from Denmark living there with Mr. Chang Futsao, and I appointed Mr. Cheng Tsai-yüen, an inquirer from Linan, to assist him.

52. MR. LANGMAN CO-OPERATES

In 1895 Mr. Beckman and his fellow-workers, seven persons in all, were transferred to the province of Shensi.² About the same time the Executive of the Mission in Shanghai appointed Mr. C. Schmidt, and a number of his fellow-workers from Germany, to work in Chekiang. A number of cities in the prefecture of Chüchow were apportioned as their sphere of service.

Formerly, Mr. Langman, also of the China Inland Mission, had been working in Chüchow, and when he returned from furlough, and before he had been appointed to another post, I invited him to go to Hu-kia-pien, in the east of Tunglu, and live there for a time, hoping this would help him.

53. A BLESSING FROM CALAMITY

In the Spring of 1896 I went to Matang Bridge to conduct worship, and because the homes of the Christians were too small, I borrowed the house of an unbeliever. After the evening service was over, I returned to my

¹ These friends were connected with some of the Associate Missions labouring in connection with the C.I.M.

² In the early 'nineties, as the number of associate workers increased, various portions of the field were apportioned to different Associate Missions. See the chapter *Dividing the Field* in *The Jubilee Story of the China Inland Mission*.

bedroom and found my bedding and a bundle of clothing missing. Looking behind the bed-curtain I saw a hole in the partition wall, and at once knew there had been a burglary. Hurriedly I examined the basket which was under the bed, in which I carried my bed-curtains. Looking inside I saw three dollars, and my heart was at rest, for in that same basket was a deed of a mulberry field belonging to that village. A lawsuit had arisen over this field, and the district magistrate had asked to see the deeds, and for this purpose I had brought them.

In the meantime the neighbours hearing that I had been robbed began to press in and give advice, but as I had found the deed I was not inclined to be troubled about my other losses. So I borrowed some bedding and went to bed.

As I cast the matter over in my mind, I was full of gratitude that the deed had not been lost. But I felt that it was not as it should be, that the house of an unbeliever should have to be borrowed for worship. So I vowed a vow that I would seek for a house in this village to be made into a chapel.

Not long after this I found what I wanted, but when the matter was nearly completed, one of the villagers interposed. Time after time this man put hindrances in the way, but the more he tried to frustrate the arrangements the more the owner determined to sell. The result was that I got more than I had hoped, and instead of part of a house I secured the whole.

I thanked God for this. If that villager had not sought to injure me I should probably not have obtained that property. Who could have known that the more he sought to frustrate, the more the owner would be determined to sell? Thus a Christian Church was established in that village. Who can fathom the will of the Lord?

54. CLOSING AND OPENING CHAPELS

During this same year, 1896, I decided that Mr. Chang Fu-tseow was not exactly suited for the work. Moreover, he was not in full harmony with Mr. Madsen. In consequence I could only approve of his leaving and seeking other occupation. And when Mr. Madsen was transferred to Shensi, I closed the Preaching Hall in Tsehch'i as I had no one else to appoint there.

But on the other hand Mr. Langman enjoyed preaching the Word in Tunglu. I therefore rented a house inside the city, and opened it as an out-station. Also Mr. Langman invited Mr. Chang Hsiao-feng, a native of Kinhwa, formerly pastor at Chüchow, to take up his residence in Tunglu for the preaching of the Gospel.

55. ACQUIRING LAND IN HANGCHOW

Toward the close of the ninth moon, just as I was about to start for Anchi, the father-in-law of one of the Chinese ministers connected with the American Presbyterian Mission North brought me news that there was a piece of land opposite the Ch'ang-ch'ing Monastery for sale, and he advised me to buy it. On asking the price he said it was two hundred dollars. On hearing this I was full of joy, for I had been desirous for many years to secure land for the building of a new place of worship. I therefore said: "Wait until I return from Anchi, and I will buy it." He asked me when that would be, and I made an appointment with him for the 15th of the tenth moon.

Unexpectedly, on my way to Anchi, I called upon one of the American Presbyterian Mission's workers at Hushu, and as they were in the act of purchasing a piece of land there they asked me to stay and assist. The

transaction was a complicated one, and in spite of much effort came to naught. Being much annoyed, and my *amour-propre* being hurt, when I reached Anchi I forgot all about the appointment I had made at Hangchow. It was not until the 22nd of the twelfth moon that I returned to Hangchow.

When Mr. Pao came to see me and reminded me of the appointment I had failed to keep, I was as one just awakened from a dream. I said: "Attending to other business I quite forgot; and I have not the money ready." He replied: "You cannot withdraw. The owner of the land is a carpenter's contractor, and his men are all from Ning-po, and want their money so as to return home. If the land is not sold he will not be able to pay the wages due, and he will be involved in trouble." I said again: "It is really because I forgot." "But," replied Mr. Pao, "you ought to think of some plan. You cannot withdraw from the bargain." To this I replied: "Although I promised to purchase the land, I made no offer as to price." "Make an offer, then," he said.

As I was in a difficulty I offered one hundred dollars. Mr. Pao exclaimed: "You are not purchasing vegetables! How can you offer only half the price?" I replied: "I have nothing else to suggest." He then left. Returning after dusk, he said: "Have you not another word to say about the price?" I answered: "I have no money; it can't be helped." To this he replied: "Unless you make some increase the bargain cannot be concluded." I therefore added ten dollars, and he left again. In a short time he returned with a writer; as the owner had agreed to sell, the deed was drawn up, and the money handed over.

On the following day, by dint of scraping, I gathered together ten dollars, which I handed to the official writer so as to have the deed registered in my name.

Now as this piece of land was, according to the boundary stones, equal to two Chinese acres, but nonetheless had been registered, and paid taxes, as one acre only, it was necessary to have it registered according to its true measurements. I was, therefore, paying rather a more liberal fee than usual. I remarked to my wife: "Buying this land and registering this deed will leave us no money for the New Year expenses. It will be like old times, when we bought those pieces of pork at New Year time. But to buy land for a new place of worship makes it well worth while."

In the afternoon the official writer came and said that it could not be registered according to its correct measurements, and returned both the deeds and the money. So I had the money for the New Year expenses. Next year I paid the duties, but paid no attention to the matter of registration until the close of the year. On this occasion the official writer was willing, for the sum of nine dollars, to register the deed in my name, and assess the taxes at the correct amount.

Having for many years borne upon my heart the desire of purchasing land, and of building a new place of worship, I was overcome with joy now that my desire was accomplished, and I thanked the Lord for His great favour.

56. ENCOUNTERING HIGHWAY ROBBERS

In the spring of 1898 I made a tour of various places to meet the converts, and to proclaim the Gospel by the way. At first my baggage-coolie was a convert, but later a common carrier was engaged. One day, after we had travelled about ten English miles, we rested at a kiosk by Well-head Bridge. Suddenly the carrier complained of acute abdominal pain, while a pedlar of sweetmeats

standing by remarked: "How can a man in such pain carry a load. Let him go, and I can engage someone else for you." To this I consented, and having paid the man two hundred cash I released him.

Behind the kiosk was a straw hut, which the pedlar entered, and bade a man go seek a coolie. After an interval he returned to say that no one could be found, but as it was dusk I might pass the night in the hut if so disposed. As there seemed no other way I removed my belongings into the hut, in the dark interior of which I found a number of evil-looking men. At first I shrank from opening up my bedding, etc. ; but as I thought the matter over, I came to see that that would be the best thing to do. I therefore spread out my bedding for the night, and then opening my bamboo box I took from it my Bible, some tracts and calendars, which I spread upon my bed. I then turned my box upside-down, and poured out the contents of my satchel that I might expose its emptiness.

There was one tall man, of about forty years of age, who repeatedly came to peer into my box. When he asked me what my occupation was, I replied: "Spreading abroad the good news of Jesus; selling Gospel portions and distributing tracts," and I seized the opportunity, and began to preach the Word to him. He said to me: "Do you know why I live in this place?" When I had said "No," he volunteered the following information. "Formerly," he said, "I was superintendent of the detectives in the district of Yütsien, but being wrongfully accused of being in league with the banditti I absconded. But I was pursued and captured by soldiers, and led captive in chains. When we were passing near a high mountain I suddenly jerked my chain out of the hand of one of my captors, and ere he could recover from

surprise I was racing up the mountainside. Though I was pursued by the soldiers and underlings, I fought them with stones, and managed to escape." After hearing his story I exhorted him to seek an honest occupation, and I soon saw that he had no evil intent towards me.

The next morning I persuaded the pedlar to be my guide. After we had travelled some miles, and had crossed a mountain pass, he ventured to say: "Now we are out of danger." As I did not comprehend his meaning, he added: "Do you not know the man who was talking to you last night?" I replied: "How could I?" He then said: "He is no good sort, and I have long wished to escape his clutches, but hitherto have not been able. He is an adept at escaping, so that though the officials have made many attempts to arrest him, they have never been able. Even if they get him into prison he manages to get out."

As we walked along the road I preached the Gospel to this man, and when we reached a convert's home in Linan I gave him seven hundred cash, and advised him to set up in business. I had noted that the brogue of this man, and of the coolie who confessed to a sudden and incapacitating pain was the same, so that I concluded that they were probably in league, and that the sudden onset of pain was simulated.

Not long afterwards I heard that the leader of that gang had been arrested, and the straw hut burnt down. Thus, once again, I had experienced God's gracious protection!

57. ESTABLISHING THE WORK AT FUYANG

In 1899 I went to superintend the much-needed repairs of the property which had been bought at Matang

Bridge, in the Fuyang district. I first saw to that part of the premises which was used as a chapel, and I also arranged about the services. While I allowed attendance at morning worship to be optional, I made attendance at the evening service compulsory.

Besides attending to the buildings, I gave careful attention to the local property, the fields, embankments, buffaloes, and carts, buying what seemed to be necessary to make the holding complete. I also purchased some shops, building sites, mulberry gardens, tea-fields, and a yard for manufacturing paper from the pith of reeds, etc., and I invited an instructor from the School of Sericulture to examine the soil in the mulberry gardens, and report on that and other things. When Instructor Ting had made a careful investigation, and had given a satisfactory report, I determined whole-heartedly to develop the scheme, hoping that it would provide an industry for the converts, and a source of income for a self-supporting Church. I told the converts that my reasons for doing all this arose from my reading of the prophet Haggai on the day I was ordained. I exhorted them to read the prophet's words, saying that if they believed and obeyed, they also would be blessed. When everything had been arranged I returned to Hangchow.

58. A FILIAL CONVERSATION

At the close of the year 1899, after my return to Hangchow, I rendered to my father-in-law, the venerable Pastor Wang, a detailed account of all the arrangements and endowments of the Church in the Fuyang district. And I decided that during the first month of the following year, 1900, I would, in company with two helpers, pay a visit to all the out-stations in each place

with a view to buttressing and strengthening the spiritual foundations of the converts, so that when the rains fell, the rivers burst their banks, and the winds blew they would not be overthrown.

For some time I had given more heed to the examination and testing of candidates before reception into the Church, lest there should be wood, hay, and stubble to be destroyed by fire. On examining the records I found that in the year before last twenty persons had been baptised, in the previous year eighteen persons, and in the current year another eighteen. If records had been kept, there would, by this time, have been some hundreds of converts.

Ever since the Kiaochow incident,¹ the local officials, seeing the power and zeal put forth on behalf of the Church,² were filled with apprehension, even if their blood did not run cold. Thorns and briars have been everywhere, and the virtuous have with difficulty been able to rest peacefully in their beds. This could be seen by the mass movements in several centres, when many hundreds of persons came to hear the Gospel. In the majority of cases they were actuated by a desire to gain temporal advantage. The facts were pitiable, but they nonetheless gave rise to anxiety. At the same

¹ In the spring of 1897 Germany informed Russia, Austria, and Italy of her intention to acquire a naval station in China. On November 1, two German Roman Catholic missionaries were murdered in Shantung. A few days later the German ships which were surveying the coast for the desired station, arrived at the mouth of Kiaochow Bay, seized the forts, and on December 4 occupied the city of Kiaochow. This was only one incident in the European exploitation of China.

² This reveals how the Chinese interpreted the political movements of the Powers, as though they were acting in support of the Church. It is small wonder that the Chinese people and the officials have at times seen Church and State as one.

time, there were those who became genuine believers, and some subsequently became preachers of the Gospel.

But where there is danger precautions must be taken, and I gave detailed instructions to the workers that a written statement must be drawn up for all inquirers to sign, ascertaining that they only came to study the Gospel. But human methods can never wholly ward off evils. There was one man who came because he was at strife with his elder brother about some seventy *meo*¹ of land. His brother had joined the Roman Catholics, so he came to join the Protestants. Although for four years I kept him on probation, he still cherished his schemes. Foresight and loyalty were necessary in every centre, for all districts were affected.

I had myself read in Christian periodicals of the way in which the Turks had persecuted and massacred the Armenians, and I had heard Mr. Robert Speer, when he visited Hangchow, relate what he himself had seen in Russia, Turkey and other countries. What he narrated was so distressing that one could barely listen to it. When his meeting was finished, I walked along the street and conversed with Bishop Moule about it. The bishop then said that though the sufferings of the Armenians were terrible and lamentable, they were in part due to the fact that when they were in prosperity they had come under the baneful influence of the Roman Catholic Church. As I listened to his words I was deeply moved. Is it possible for the Christians of China to escape the same contamination? If one day the halt and maim of the Far East arise and walk in the steps of the sick men of the Near East, then both the Jade and the Common Stone will perish together.

One day when I was conversing with Mr. Langman

¹ A Chinese acre.

about these things, he said: "But there is another reason why Turkey acts as she does," and he drew a map to explain. And then he added: "If Russia has no designs on China, similar troubles will not happen here." To this remark Pastor Wang replied: "I agree. And you, Pastor Ren, need not be too distressed. I am concerned about you. For years past you have scraped and screwed to establish a self-supporting Church. If, by the will of God, you should be gathered Home before I am, I could not assume the heavy responsibilities you have accepted. I am continually troubled about you. You cannot do better than remove your holdings in Anchi and Fuyang to Hangchow, lest some day you should be unable to maintain your control. The proverb says: 'Distant water cannot quench a local fire.'" To this I replied: "Things having reached their present pass, I can only act as circumstances dictate. It may prove as the classics say: 'In a district of ten homes there will surely be one righteous person.' "

Who could have known, that from the day when I left Fuyang and returned to Hangchow, I should be so pressed with multitudinous responsibilities as to be unable to visit Fuyang again for four years, and Anchi for more than six years? Moreover, all those schemes which through successive years had taxed mind and heart were banished from my mind through preoccupation with the heavier responsibilities at Hangchow, responsibilities I could not devolve upon others, but which a sense of justice would not allow me to neglect.

BOOK IV

THE BOXER CRISIS AND AFTER

FROM THE TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR OF KWANG HSÜ

TO

THE NINTH YEAR OF THE REPUBLIC

1900-1920

THE BOXER CRISIS AND AFTER

I. BEGINNING OF THE BOXER TROUBLES

EARLY in 1900, accompanied by two helpers, I visited a number of the stations, and spent a considerable time in each of them—forty days for instance in Linan—strengthening the faith of the converts. At this time the Boxer hooligans had commenced their tumultuous proceedings in the north, but as I had not carefully read the papers I was not well informed as to their doings. I therefore sent one of my helpers back to Hangchow to seek for information, while in company with the other I continued my tour.

On the 2nd day of the sixth moon, just after evening worship at Matang Bridge, I saw the helper who had been to Hangchow standing in front of me. He told me he had travelled by forced stages to bring me a letter from Pastor Wang. When I had opened and read the letter I knew for the first time that the Boxer roughs were a fierce set, and that the trouble was of such a serious nature that nearly all the missionaries and a number of the Chinese preachers had fled from Hangchow to Shanghai. Putting the letter in my pocket, I gave myself up to the converts. But when the majority had departed after worship, I told a few of them the nature of Pastor Wang's letter, and then leaving my two helpers to make an inventory of the various things at Matang

Bridge, and to advertise the sale of the grain from the fields locally cultivated, I returned to Hangchow, starting on the journey before daylight on the following morning.

2. THE SECRET DECREE TO EXTERMINATE CHRISTIANITY

That very day, namely, the 29th of June 1900, proved to be a day of terrible significance. The Empress Dowager had already promulgated a secret decree to each of the provinces, enjoining the utter extermination of all the Chinese and foreign leaders of the Church. But H.E. Sheng Suen-hwai, the superintendent of southern trade; H.E. Liu K'uen-yi, the Governor-General of the two Kiang provinces; and H.E. Chang Chih-tung, the Governor-General of the two Hu provinces, entered into an agreement to preserve order and peace in the south, and not to obey the Empress Dowager's commands. And these high officials invited H.E. Liu Shu-t'ang, the Governor of Chekiang, to throw in his lot with them, and sign the same agreement. He was irresolute at first, but he promised a reply by the 29th of June. And on that day he did affix his signature to the agreement, but by reason of his delay the provincial judge had already sent the fatal edict to each prefect and district magistrate in the province, with disastrous results.

3. I ACCEPT MULTIFARIOUS RESPONSIBILITIES

One day Bishop Moule, of the Church Missionary Society, accompanied by the British Consul, Mr. H. F. King, who resided in Hangchow, came to consult me.

They wanted to send off a special messenger, with urgent letters, to various places in the prefectures of Kinhwa and Chüchow, urging the missionaries to escape to Shanghai immediately. On the next day, the 26th of the sixth moon, I appointed two colporteurs, Messrs. Yao and Lo, to travel with all speed to these several places. When they arrived at Fuyang, they went to bathe with several others, and Mr. Lo was drowned. Mr. Yao hastened on to Matang Bridge, and thence dispatched a messenger to me, and when I had received the sad tidings I sent a man with money to have the river dragged for the body. I also sent a letter for Mr. Yao to deliver at Lanchi, requesting also that a man might accompany him to Chüchow.

Every day, early in the morning, I traversed all the streets of the city in order to take secret note of what was transpiring; and because it was customary for many scholars and gentry to drink tea in the tea-shop at Feng-loh Bridge, I repaired there to listen to the conversation. I bought all kinds of papers, and gave close heed to all that was happening in all the provinces. At all of the stations connected with the China Inland Mission there was much disquiet and many perturbing reports. As it was necessary to keep in touch with all these, I was so pressed with business that I had no leisure whatever.

4. THE BOXERS AT CHÜCHOW

Not long after this, when I was returning from the tea-shop at Feng-loh Bridge, Dr. Kember sent for me. I went immediately, and found that Consul King had arrived before me. He asked me if I had any news from Chüchow, and I told him I had not. He then informed

me that all the foreigners¹ at Chüchow had been killed. I asked him: "Where did you get that information?" He replied: "From the French Roman Catholic priest who lives there." To this I said: "I dare not trust information from such a source." He rejoined: "Judging by the way in which the man spoke, the news is true. Now, how can we ascertain what actually took place? We had better, each of us, send a letter to Governor Liu, and ask for an immediate reply. When we have his reply we can meet again and consult one another."

I acted at once upon his suggestion, and during the evening the Governor's reply came, saying: "It is rumoured that there is trouble at Chüchow, and I have already appointed commissioners to go and investigate. I will let you know the result when I have obtained trustworthy information."

The next morning I went to the hospital to meet Consul King, and found that he had received an identical reply. He then requested me to send special messengers to ascertain the facts. These I dispatched with thirty dollars, so as to assist any who might be in difficulties.

Then suddenly I heard that bandits in the Kiangshan district had raided Chüchow, and that one of the district magistrates had committed suicide rather than fall into their hands. It was also reported that these men would soon attack Hangchow. The hearts of the people throughout the province were much perturbed, and they were thrown into great confusion. Knowing that the converts at Chüchow would be in trouble, I sent other messengers with money to relieve them. Further, the news that the foreigners had been killed also reached

¹ Mr. and Mrs. D. B. Thompson and their two sons; and the Misses J. Desmond, Edith Sherwood, and Etta Manchester, all of the China Inland Mission, were killed; the first five on July 21, and the last two on July 24.

me, but only when I wrote to the Governor did he acknowledge it to be true.

At this juncture Consul King said to me: "With things as they are it is no longer wise for me to reside within the city; I am therefore removing to the Maritime Customs at Kong Port, and I shall stay for the time being with Mr. G. F. Montgomery, the Commissioner. All matters connected with the churches within the city I commit to you. We can correspond about ordinary news; but should there be matters of special importance you should come and consult me at Kong Port."

Once again I dispatched messengers to Chüchow, this time to bring the family of Pastor Ch'en T'ien-fuh and the converts to Hangchow, from whence I transferred them to Shanghai.

5. MY FAMILY TAKE REFUGE IN SHANGHAI

By this time all the foreigners in Hangchow city had taken refuge in Shanghai, and Pastor Wang said to me: "Sin-k'ai Lane is nothing less than a trap [literally like a bird-cage]. If the two ends of the lane are held, we should be like a bird, which though it has wings, cannot fly out of the cage in which it is confined. Moreover, soldiers are stationed in the Ch'ang-ch'ing Monastery which augurs no good. How can we remain here any longer? We cannot do better than escape to Shanghai."

To this I answered: "With such onerous responsibilities as I have, how can I be concerned for the safety of myself or of my family?" Pastor Wang replied: "That is so; but though you are willing to be sacrificed on the altar of duty, your wife and children are not necessarily willing." "Well," I answered, "and what can I do? I can-

not desert my post." Then Pastor Wang asked: "And how would it do if I were to escort them away instead of you?" "That would do very well," I said, and straightway requested him to take my family to Shanghai, with the exception of my eldest son whom I wished to keep with me.

Every day I carried a quantity of small silver [dimes] on my person, so as to be ready against eventualities. I also banked two hundred dollars with a money-changer, that I might be ready to buy several tens of acres of land adjoining Sin-k'ai Lane. Before this I had been asked two hundred dollars for this land; I had begun by offering one hundred and fifty, and had gradually raised my offer to two hundred. But then the owner suddenly raised his price to three hundred dollars, and the business had fallen through. Now that there were rumours on all hands, and men's hearts were failing them for fear, I hoped the owner would be willing to accept two hundred, and so I kept the money ready. And two years later this transaction was completed according to my hope. Thank God for His grace!

6. COMMISSIONED TO INVESTIGATE THE CHÜCHOW AFFAIRS

From this time onward matters became daily more and more serious. Consul King had found it necessary to move to Shanghai, and because the foreign Ambassadors were besieged in Peking, all matters of international importance in Central China had been handed over to Sir Pelham Warren, the British Consul-General. He requested Mr. Meadows, the superintendent of the work of the Mission to which I belonged in Chekiang, to instruct me to make a careful investigation of the happenings in

Chüchow, and later on he telegraphed for me to go to Shanghai, as he wished for information concerning certain of the Chekiang officials.

To Mr. Meadows I said: "A sense of duty will not permit me to refuse to attend to the affairs of the Church; as for the dangers connected with such service I can only commit my way to the Lord." Mr. Meadows told me subsequently that he had reported my answer to the Consul-General, and he had given my name to the British Foreign Office and requested protection for me. Nevertheless my whole trust was in the words of the Lord: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore."

I employed many methods for investigating the affairs entrusted to me, such as buying the daily records of the two offices of the Provincial Governor and the Provincial Treasury, as well as copies of telegrams from the telegraph office. I also asked my friends to secure for me copies of all the official correspondence and dispatches concerning Chüchow from the Criminal Investigation Department. In consequence of all the labour that this involved I had no leisure whatever.

It was not long after this that the foreign Allied Forces entered Peking, and the Empress Dowager and the Emperor fled to Sian. The Chinese Government appointed Prince Ch'ing and H.E. Li Hung-chang to deal with the missionary problem, but so far as the Chüchow case was concerned both the British and American ministers deputed that to Consul-General Warren. And all the communications between Consul-General Warren and myself, whether these were instructions to me or information from me, these all passed

through the hands of Missionary Wright of Yungkang, who travelled to and fro on purpose.

When I had made a thorough investigation I wrote out a detailed report, and sent it to Consul-General Warren. Acting in accordance with my instructions, I reported the doings and the guilt of the various officials, and of the gentry and the people. This was for transmission to the British Minister, and for him to hand on to the Chinese authorities in Peking.

H.E. Li Hung-chang took great exception to this report. He somewhat indignantly asked the British Minister if Consul-General Warren had been in person to Chüchow to investigate the case, and when the British Minister said "No," he then asked: "From what source then has all this detailed information been obtained?" The British Minister said: "The investigation has been made by a certain Pastor Ren." H.E. Li Hung-chang replied: "Are all the words of my countrymen to be trusted?" The British Minister had nothing to say to this, as he was not sure there might not be some defect in the report. He therefore telegraphed to Consul-General Warren, ordering that all the documents should be sent direct to the British Legation for confirmation; as though you could not depend upon the unsupported word of a Chinese! The documents were sent, and after the lapse of a short time a telegram was received from the British Minister stating that all was satisfactory and in order.

During the eighth moon, the Manchu Court in Peking dismissed from office the Governor of the province, and the Provincial Judge; banished the Intendent of Circuit, and the Brigadier-General who resided in Chüchow; and inflicted the death penalty upon the Major and some forty of the mob. The Prefect of Chüchow was retired

without loss of rank, and the gentry responsible for the local police were dismissed from office as a warning to others. It was furthermore enjoined that the officials and gentry of Chüchow should set apart a cemetery for the burial of the Chinese and foreigners who had been killed; and that the burial of these persons, which should be with becoming rites, should be attended by representatives appointed by the British and American Ministers, to demonstrate the serious nature of what had happened.

7. A GREAT TEMPTATION

When Consul-General Warren had received my report he mentioned it to H.E. Sheng Süen-hwai, the superintendent of southern trade, who had been one of the officials to enter into the agreement not to carry out the Empress Dowager's commands, and he had reported it to Governor Liu. Governor Liu declared that my report was untrustworthy, and was based solely on rumour. In consequence of this Consul-General Warren said that he would come in person to Chüchow, with an escort of foreign soldiers, and make an inquiry on the spot. Governor Liu strenuously opposed this idea, but suddenly he was deposed from office by the authorities in Peking.

The report that the British Consul-General, accompanied by foreign troops, intended to proceed to Chüchow, much frightened the gentry and people of that city, and in the eleventh moon they sent a deputation to wait on me and solicit protection, offering me the sum of one hundred thousand dollars. At the time I was suffering from influenza, and was therefore unable to receive them. But I appointed Mr. Sang, of the American Presbyterian Mission South, to see them on my behalf,

to return their petition, and to say: "Although it is reported that the British Consul-General will proceed to Chüchow with foreign troops, I am convinced this will not come to pass; you may be at peace about it. But with reference to the way Christian men do business, they will certainly never sacrifice the high principles of probity and mercy. It is therefore of no avail to present your petition with a bribe. Take back your money, and use it in local benevolence, after the tragic happening in your city." Thereupon the deputation returned to Chüchow in peace.

8. BY GOD'S GRACE I OBTAIN A SITE

In the spring of 1901, the Roman Catholics chose a piece of land, to the east of Sin-k'ai Lane, as part of their indemnity. The Foreign Bureau received instructions from the Provincial Governor to arrange the transfer, but in the good providence of God the instructions came into the hands of the wrong secretary, there being two men of the same surname. The man who received the instructions was well acquainted with me, and he at once came and told me. Without delay I called upon the other secretary, the man to whom the business pertained, and told him that when he drew the plans of the land, he must show distinctly the four boundaries of the piece of land which I had bought some five years before, for I had certain knowledge that it was contained within the site the Roman Catholics had marked out for themselves.

It so happened that I had occasion, on account of other business, to go to the hospital, and who should I meet on the way but Dr. Main. Dr. Main exclaimed: "How fortunate. I was on my way to call upon you!" He

then invited me into the hospital, and said: "Consul Carvil, who lives at Soochow, has just told me that the French newspaper published at Siccawei states that the Roman Catholic Church has fixed on a site of some ten Chinese acres within the Hangchow city, just opposite to the China Inland Mission property, and they have requested the Governor of the province to transfer it to them that they may build a Church. The Consul does not think it a wise thing that the two Churches should be contiguous, and he has commissioned me to ask you to petition the Provincial Governor to apportion to the Roman Catholics another site." I replied: "I have already been told about this, and I have asked the district secretary to see that the property of the China Inland Mission is clearly marked when he draws the plans. I also purpose calling upon the district magistrate to discuss the matter with him in detail." With this Dr. Main agreed.

In the afternoon of the next day, when I went to call upon the district magistrate, I found that he had just returned from the Governor's Yamen. Questioning me he said: "Have you come about the site which is being apportioned to the Roman Catholics?" I said: "Yes." He then said: "When I saw by the plan drawn by the district secretary that the land belonging to the *Ch'ung-Yih T'ang*¹ was included in the site, I personally pointed this out to the Provincial Governor, at the same time calling attention to the issues involved. He saw that the arrangement was undesirable, and has instructed the Foreign Bureau to request the Roman Catholic Bishop to select another site."

The consequence was that the local landowners hear-

¹ This title, which may be translated The Church for the Adoration of THE ONE, was the name Pastor Ren gave to the self-supporting churches he founded, to distinguish them from the other churches of the China Inland Mission.

ing of the Roman Catholic intentions, and fearing that they might not be indemnified by their own Government offered their property to me. I at once offered them a reasonable price, and by the exchange of a certain mulberry field for another, I was gradually able to buy land until I had acquired more than thirty Chinese acres.¹ Tell me, now! If I had not received special favour of God, would it have been possible for me to have obtained all this land?

9. AN END TO CERTAIN PERSECUTIONS

In the early summer of 1901, ringleader Yü and other persecutors,² who had destroyed the chapel at Tsiang-kia-wu, were seized at Chuki, and after trial were punished. This punishment was in consequence of these men and their confederates having during 1900 destroyed the place of worship at Tsiang-kia-wu, and of having plundered the homes of the converts. I had previously reported the facts to the district magistrate, and now at the settlement—demanded by the Foreign Powers—which followed the Boxer persecutions, these men were sent to prison.³ Those who had been injured

¹ The Chinese *meo* has been fixed by Treaty at 733½ square yards, or 6.6 *meo* to the acre.

² For the previous history of these men see Book III. Chapter xxxiii.

³ To avoid any misunderstanding it should be made clear that the China Inland Mission was in no way responsible for what the Foreign Powers demanded in order to vindicate their sense of law and order. The decision of the Mission was "not only not to enter any claim against the Chinese Government, but to refrain from accepting compensation even if offered," whether for life, injury, or loss of property. The result was that in some places the officials issued proclamations stating: "Jesus in His instructions inculcates forbearance and forgiveness, and all desire for revenge is discouraged. Mr. Hoste is able to carry out these principles to the full." With regard to the compensation of *Chinese*, this was regarded as a matter chiefly between the Chinese Government and its own subjects.—ED.

or robbed were compensated, so far as that was possible.

10. ESTABLISHING WORK AT ANCHANG

In the early months of 1902 an out-station was opened in the market town of Anchang which is in the Shaohing prefecture. Five years before this, certain converts from Siaoshan had opened a shop in Anchang for the sale of weights and scales, and they had preached the Gospel in the vicinity. The first converts gathered in as a result of this work were baptised in Siaoshan in 1899, and from this time inquirers increased in number. Early in 1900 five more persons were baptised, and the consequence was that the shop became too small for the number of persons gathered for worship. To meet this need a place of worship was formally opened there in 1902.

11. THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES AT CHÜCHOW

In the autumn of 1902, the cemetery prepared by the officials and gentry of Chüchow for the burial of the martyred missionaries was ready, and they asked that a date might be fixed for the interment. After consultation with Mr. Meadows, the 28th day of the eighth moon was decided upon, and this was reported to Consul-General Warren. The British Minister appointed Vice-Consul Hewlett to be his representative, and the American Consul-General gave the American flag to Vice-Consul Hewlett to bring to Hangchow to ask me to be his representative. In addition to Vice-Consul Hewlett, Mr. Meadows and myself, there were present a number of missionaries, namely, Messrs. C. Fairclough, J. B. Miller, A. Wright, R. Röhm, Miss Guex and others, together

with the local officials, both civil and military, and gentry. By general request I conducted the service. I returned to Hangchow at the beginning of the ninth moon.

12. BUILDING A NEW CHURCH

During the autumn of the previous year, *i.e.* 1901, I had made preparations for the building of a new church in Hangchow on the land which I had bought. Towards this object I had been assisted from the headquarters of the China Inland Mission in Shanghai, to the extent of two thousand six hundred dollars. The Mission had also contributed more than eight hundred dollars towards the erection of a street chapel for evangelistic purposes. We then commenced to build, and the work was completed by the autumn of 1902.

On the 27th day of the ninth moon we held the dedication services. The gathering was a large one, for in addition to converts from all of the surrounding China Inland Mission stations, the Chinese and foreign workers connected with the Church Missionary Society also came, so that we totalled more than four hundred persons. The local officials and gentry had not been informed, as we did not want the reverent dedication of the premises to the worship of God to be spoiled by the pomp and ceremony that their coming would have entailed.

13. THE NEW CHURCH IN CHÜCHOW

In the late spring of 1903, a new church was opened in Chüchow, the old building having been destroyed by the Boxers. Mr. Meadows and I went together for the

opening services, while the officials and the gentry came to offer their congratulations. Again I was asked to conduct the services.

On the following morning, prior to our departure for Hangchow, we held a farewell meeting, and I then exhorted all present to forget the things which were behind—by which I meant the Boxer persecutions—and press on toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I compared the fleeting honours, which on two occasions had recently been paid to the church in Chüchow—the official obsequies, and the official opening of this church—to goods bought in a shop. The outside wrapping might be showy and attractive, but that was soon discarded for the solid worth within. It was of the Lord's mercy that the tragic incident was closed, and the handling of the settlement had been like walking on the edge of a precipice, or like walking on thin ice. I had constantly cried to the Lord: "Truly I am foolish and infirm, and much afraid of committing some disastrous error! I beseech Thee bestow Thy mercy upon me, guide and support me as I pass through this dark and bewildering way."

It was for this reason I had not invited the officials and the gentry at Hangchow when we dedicated our new church there. I had made up my mind to hold aloof from rich and influential people. I therefore besought the converts at Chüchow to stop the beginnings of evil, and to beware lest the great Adversary gained any advantage over them.

In the afternoon we left the city, the officials and the gentry escorting us to our boat, and wishing us a prosperous journey. We forthwith returned to Hangchow.

14. BUILDING A CHURCH IN HUNG KIA VILLAGE

By the winter of 1904 the converts in the village of Hung Kia had so increased as to need a new place of worship. At first they had met in a convert's home; afterwards they assembled in the old temple dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy. But at the time of which we are speaking the elders of the Hung Clan drew up a deed, handing over for the use of the local church not only the old Temple of the Goddess of Mercy, but also the ground on which stood the Shrine of the God of Literature, with all the trees upon it. This deed I sent to the office of the district magistrate to be stamped with the official seal. When all was completed I commenced to build a church upon the site of the Shrine of the God of Literature. This was finished by the second moon of the following year.

15. WALLS HAVE EARS

In the first few weeks of 1905 certain complications arose at Matang Bridge, in the Fuyang district, concerning boundaries. I went there, taking all the deeds, that the questions might be cleared up. I had contemplated leaving on the 25th day of the second moon, in order to hold the dedicatory service of the new chapel at Hung Kia, and I had asked Mr. Fairclough to join me. But while the various landowners were smoothing out the various boundary difficulties, each one complained of what they had suffered at the hands of the Roman Catholics,¹ of which there were many in the vicinity.

¹ To understand this and the following chapters it is necessary to remember that in March 1899 the Chinese Government, after pressure, conceded official rank to each order of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Such official status inevitably caused many unprincipled persons to

I tried to comfort them by saying: "You should be no longer troubled about this. What the Roman Catholic Church has depended upon is France, and it was this that made our own Government fearful. But according to the papers which publish foreign intelligence, a separation has recently taken place between the Church and State in France, so that the French Government is no longer guardian of matters affecting the papacy. If you read the papers which publish such news, you will learn the details." While we were conversing, our conversation was overheard by some of the Roman Catholics who were eavesdropping. These men reported what I had said to the Chinese priest who lived in the city, and this aroused his anger. At the time I was unaware of this.

16. SAVED FROM A TRAP

About a month later, I received a written invitation from a Mrs. Wu of High Bridge to come to dinner, in order that I might discuss some matters concerning property. This invitation she confirmed by coming in person and saying: "I have invited the village secretary

seek the protection and prestige of the Roman Catholic Church. Not only did the Protestant converts suffer, but many of the non-Christian Chinese found themselves unable to obtain justice at law against those who could rely upon the official support of their priests. To show how high feeling ran at this time it may be mentioned that in Ninghai the people were so incensed at their inability to obtain justice that they soaked a Roman Catholic priest in oil and then burnt him alive. They believed that their own officials were either overawed or bribed.

In January 1906 the French Minister at Peking notified the Chinese Government of the Separation Act, and that in consequence they were no longer guardians of the Roman Catholic Church. It should also be recorded that though the Chinese Government offered similar rank to Protestant missionaries, this was unanimously declined.—ED.

Ni, and a Mr. Ch'iu to meet you at dinner." Suspecting nothing I accepted the invitation.

But on the forenoon of the day I was to go, an acquaintance of mine, who was a Roman Catholic, came to have a chat with me. He asked me: "Are you going to dine at Mrs. Wu's to-day?" I answered: "Yes." He responded: "But you can refuse." I then said: "What made you say that?" He answered: "It might be a good thing to decline, lest no good should come of it."

As this man was one in whom I had small confidence, I said: "Having promised, it is not becoming to decline." To this he replied: "I urge you, sir, to decline: it will prove the best thing you can do." I then proceeded to probe him for his reasons in speaking thus. He then said: "It is reported that there are to be theatricals at High Bridge; you could come after dinner to see them." I laughed, for his words seemed insincere. He then added: "Mrs. Wu has invited you to a midday meal. Immediately afterwards there are to be theatricals, and I know that the crowd who will gather have no good intentions towards you. I urge the rejection of the invitation."

"But," I rejoined, "Secretary Ni and Mr. Ch'iu are to meet me at dinner; what do you mean by 'no good intentions'?" He answered: "Secretary Ni was at High Bridge yesterday, but he has since returned to the city. And as for Mr. Ch'iu, he certainly will not be there. If you inquire you will find it is so."

After my visitor had gone I made inquiries, and learned that Secretary Ni had returned to the city, and that Mr. Ch'iu had never promised to go to dinner. I therefore sent a message to Mrs. Wu to say that having learned that Messrs. Ni and Ch'iu would not be there I was unable to come. Mrs. Wu immediately came herself to see me, but I adhered to my refusal, saying that no

matter of boundaries could be cleared up in the absence of the village secretary. So Mrs. Wu went away in a rage.

17. WITHIN THE LIONS' DEN

On the next day we found ourselves unable to hire sedan-chairs, though we tried several places. When it came to evening I said: "The outlook is ominous, for, even if we could hire chairs, as all the bearers are Roman Catholics we should have an anxious time on the road. It will be better to walk, and have our baggage carried to Ts'ing-yüin Bridge where we shall be able to get chairs." There were six of us together when I said this, and we had prayer several times.

Early the next morning I collected all the deeds, counted them, and put them into a box, purposing to send them by care of Mr. Yüen back to Hangchow. But while we were at breakfast one of the Romanists came in. I invited him to join us at table. That day there was a dense fog, and it was not possible to see who might be coming along the road. When the meal was finished some other men came in, and grasping me by both hands said: "Mr. Ren, do come to High Bridge for a talk." I said: "Very well," and went downstairs with them. Then I saw that there were several tens of men, all with fire-arms, waiting for me, and among them was a former convert who had been disciplined.

As soon as we were out of the house they shouted: "There is another man," and soon pulled Mr. Yüen out. I walked in front, with Mr. Yüen about an arrow's flight behind. When we had gone half-way they all fired off their guns to give us a scare. Occasionally Mr. Yüen was struck with their fists and reviled. As we drew near to High Bridge I silently prayed for protection, and that

the opening of the new church at Hung Kia, which was to take place in two days' time, should not be delayed. When I had finished praying I felt emboldened.

When we had reached the west end of High Bridge, a crowd of Roman Catholics came out of the tea-shop, and one of them grasping my hand said: "So you have come after all! It was you who said that our Pope had been destroyed!" Shaking myself free from his grasp, I said: "How could I be so foolish as that? What I said was that a separation had taken place between Church and State in France, and that France was therefore no longer responsible for protecting papal interests. This has all been published in those papers which give foreign intelligence. Everybody knows about it."

At this juncture there were many of them who rolled up their sleeves and brandished their fists, as though they were about to seize and thrash me, so great was their rage. By the Lord's mercy, however, Mr. Ch'iu, who had opened a tobacconist shop, and the official beadle hurried forward and drew me into the tea-shop, these men sitting down one on each side of me so as to protect me. But as the crowd pressed in, and Mr. Ch'iu failed to pacify them, he invited me to take refuge in his shop. With the aid of the beadle he escorted me through the mob into his shop, and when the Roman Catholics pressed in he said: "The space behind the counter is reserved for the shopkeeper and his assistants. No one else is allowed to go there." But as the crowd paid no heed, he led me into his guest-hall. But the crowd followed there. He then caused me to go upstairs, saying to the crowd: "Upstairs are the women's apartments; no one is allowed there, except by my special permission." Then he joined me upstairs, where we sat undisturbed.

18. THE WINDS AND WAVES SUBSIDE

Fearing that Mr. Yüen might be hurt, I asked someone to bring him along. But just then word came that he was safe and in hiding, and also that my box with the deeds was intact where I had left it. When I heard that the deeds were safe I was much comforted.

By this time news of the riot had reached Tsiang-kia-wu, which was some five English miles away. As there was a military camp there six soldiers were sent, but these men when they saw the number of armed Roman Catholics withdrew. But the natives of Tsiang-kia-wu being fearful lest the Romanists might wax more formidable if they were not resisted, contemplated gathering together one hundred men to fight them. As the news of this came to the ears of the Catholics, they strengthened their forces for the encounter.

When this news reached Mr. Ch'iu he became much alarmed, and said to me: "If there is a fight, High Bridge will be destroyed." I answered: "In times of peace there are laws for such emergencies. I certainly do not want the men of Tsiang-kia-wu to take action on my behalf." Mr. Ch'iu said: "If we wait until they arrive, it will not be easy to disperse them." I answered: "It is important to prevent them setting out," and sent messengers to stop them.

The Roman Catholics, knowing that it was difficult to lay hands on me so long as I remained in Mr. Ch'iu's private apartments, sent a man who had no connection with their church to invite me to his home, ostensibly to discuss what apology was due to me for the affront I had suffered. He offered me a sedan-chair, but I declined. My enemies then changed their tactics and sent another messenger. Fearing that I might put the matter into the

hands of the authorities, they suggested that if I would give them a written promise not to press for an official inquiry they would disperse; but that if I would not give such a promise it would become a case of a man riding a tiger.¹ I replied: "I am not able to do what you ask."

After a long delay the leading literary man of High Bridge, fearing that serious consequences might follow, hastened to the district Yamen and reported the situation. First, two of the magistrate's chief servants came in chairs, and escorted me by chair to Matang Bridge. Afterwards, the officials themselves came with more than a hundred soldiers; but as the crowd had already dispersed, they returned to the city after a brief stay in the scholar's home.

19. OPENING THE HUNG KIA CHURCH

The same night I left for the city, and next day called upon the district magistrate to thank him for coming in person to my aid. I was also able to tell him in detail the facts of the case. Early the next day I started off for Hung Kia, and by dint of hard travelling all day and all the following night, I reached Hung Kia shortly after dawn the following morning.

As I had not been able to arrive for the dedication service at the time appointed, Mr. Fairclough concluded that something unusual had detained me, and he gathered the converts together for prayer. When I did arrive and recounted my experiences they thanked the Lord for His mercies to me. Forthwith we held the dedication service, and also examined the candidates for

¹ The man who rides a tiger dare not dismount, lest he be devoured. This figure is used of a dangerous predicament.—ED.

baptism. I was detained for some days in the village, and afterwards returned to Hangchow.

20. A DARKNESS INTERCEPTS THE SKY

Because the district magistrate was in fear of the Roman Catholics, I petitioned the Hangchow Prefect to issue instruction. But in spite of this the matter was compromised. I therefore requested the Hangchow Prefect to have the case judged at Hangchow itself. But even then an influential Manchu, who had been attaché in France, and was a professor in a Roman Catholic college, being bribed, supported the Romanists. But at this juncture the Provincial Foreign Office demanded all the official documents, saying that it was a case affecting the diplomatic relations of foreign countries. But the matter was really shelved, and the crooked was called straight. This decision was published in the papers.

21. THE SUN SHINES FORTH AGAIN

Some time after this the matter was brought to the notice of the British Minister in Peking by the Consul-General in Shanghai, and a Vice-Consul was appointed to investigate the facts. The issue was that one of the guilty party was punished, while the others were reported to have fled.

When all the excitement had abated, the truth came to light. It had been reported to the local Roman Catholic priest that I had asserted that the Pope had been destroyed! He had reported this to his superior, and was said to have received instructions to have my eyes plucked out and my four limbs broken, so that I

should be rendered helpless for life.¹ The invitation to the midday meal at Mrs. Wu's home was a ruse to entrap me, and when that failed the armed band came to compel me to go. In the midst of these ten thousand dangers the Lord inclined Mr. Ch'iu and the beadle to protect me. As one of the Chinese Pastors of the American Presbyterian Mission said to me: "Dens of lions are not limited to Old Testament times. What difference is there between your experience and Daniel's?"

But not only was I protected from hurt; from this time the Roman Catholics curbed their movements, and law-abiding people were able to sleep in peace.

22. CONFISCATING THE LAND

In the spring of 1906 Mr. T'ang Sheo-ts'ien, who had been appointed by Imperial decree as the General Manager of the Shanghai-Hangchow-Ning-po Railway, fixed on the ground in front of the Ling-chih Monastery as the site for the Hangchow Station. This land was measured, and those who paid Government taxes were compensated, but those who paid no taxes received nothing. It was as though a whale or a tiger were devouring the land. No one dare oppose.

The land which I had bought some five years before soon came in for similar attention, and the General Manager came to measure it. It so happened that that very day I had gone with friends to see the bore.² The members of my family therefore would not consent to anything being done before I returned.

¹ The footnote on p. 191 has already indicated to what extremes of fury and ferocity passion could rise at this time.—ED.

² The Tsientang River, on which Hangchow is situated, is celebrated for its bore, which sometimes attains a height of twelve or fourteen feet with a stretch of a mile and a half in width.—ED.

When I came home in the evening I learned the news and was much distressed. After evening worship, when all the family had retired to rest, I went out to the middle of the land and prayed, saying: "O Lord, I beseech Thee, examine my heart. It was only through Thy gracious aid that I was able to obtain this land. It was for Thy Church, and not for myself. He who wants to seize this land is not opposing me, but Thee. I beseech Thee teach me how to deal with this man to-morrow."

When I had finished praying I went to my bedroom and sat there for a time. Then again I went to the same place and prayed as before. This I did many times throughout the whole night, never seeking sleep. When it began to dawn I still was without a plan, but about seven o'clock I was blessed with a revelation from the Lord. It was that I was to send a messenger with my card to the General Manager, to say that without an official dispatch from the Government Office my land was not to be measured. The reply came that I should certainly have one, and a little later another message arrived to say that he had instructed the district magistrate to bring the official dispatch himself at three o'clock in the afternoon.

Later in the morning I went to Ch'eng Huang Hill, to fulfil an engagement to drink tea with the three friends who had accompanied me to see the bore. At noon I begged to be excused, saying that I had some important business to attend to, and when I was asked what it was I told them. One of them, Mr. Sie, said: "With such a weighty matter to see to, why did you not speak sooner. You ought to return and be ready." He also promised to be with me himself at three o'clock.

When the time appointed came Mr. Sie was there, and

we had prayer together, but though we waited till dusk no one came, nor could we explain why.

23. A GREAT VICTORY

I afterwards learned that the General Manager went to the offices of the Provincial Governor, and was there informed by the Governor's private secretary: "Mr. Ren's words were well considered. In the construction of this railway a foreign loan was declined, and the money was found by the Chinese merchants. If the Government Offices were to issue an official dispatch, it might prove inconvenient hereafter. You cannot do better than negotiate with him yourself."

In consequence of what has been related the General Manager dared not employ compulsion, but appointed two officials to approach me. These two men repeatedly came to see me, saying: "It is essential that this land should be acquired by the railway." All that they said I was able to refute. Then the General Manager changed his plans and offered me an exchange of sites. To this I said: "If the land you offer is suitable for the purpose for which the land was purchased, and if there is no other reason against an exchange, it might be possible." To this he answered: "You shall have acre for acre, but it will be hard to find another site so excellent as yours." He then offered to give in exchange the site on which the Ch'ang-ch'ing Monastery stood, and to rebuild the church and other premises there. But to this I did not agree, for on examining the land I found it low, and liable to be flooded; moreover, the acreage was insufficient.

One of the officials then said to me: "Beyond the exchange of land, there will certainly be an acknowledgment in money of your willingness to change. Mention

what sum you like, there is no doubt but that the General Manager will approve." To this I replied: "Do you take me for a *compradore* in a foreign firm [*i.e.* open to a bribe]. I tell you truly, I look upon the Church as though it were my home, and I look upon my home as though it were the Church."

The General Manager again changed his tactics. This time he invited Dr. Gilbert Reid of the International Institute of Shanghai to come to Hangchow, and left it to him to invite Mr. Hoste, the general director of the China Inland Mission, and Mr. Meadows, the superintendent of the Mission's work in the province, to fix a date for a conference on the subject. Now Dr. Reid was well known for his ability to state a case, and he argued eloquently on behalf of the General Manager. But all he said I refuted. He offered that a high price should be paid for the land, but I said there was no need for that; it would suffice if the General Manager himself would buy me another piece of land equal to this.

The General Manager now made another move. He sent one of his officials to invite me to a feast near the West Lake, saying that Dr. Gilbert Reid, the private secretary of the Provincial Governor, and a certain Hanlin graduate who had been with the Chinese Ambassador to Great Britain, would all be there and desire conversation with me. I consented to the proposal, but at dusk on Sunday—and the feast was to be on Monday—I heard that Dr. Reid had returned to Shanghai. I therefore declined the invitation, whereupon the one who invited me said: "Why do you at first accept, and then afterwards decline?" I replied: "You informed me that Dr. Reid would be there, and I have since ascertained that he has already returned to Shanghai. That is the reason." He then rebuked me for not keeping my

word, saying that such conduct was not consistent with Christ's teaching. To this I answered: "Confucius when he wanted to decline an engagement did so on the ground of sickness. What is there to prevent me declining on the plea of indisposition? Nevertheless, the teaching of Christ does not allow anyone to tell a lie. I have therefore told you that you have misled me by saying that Dr. Reid would be at the feast. That is why I have declined to be there. Is not that consistent with the teaching of Christ?" He then pressed for my refusal in writing. To this I said: "Are you not the accredited representative of the General Manager? To hand you my refusal in writing would be to treat you like a coolie! How dare I do that?" Thereupon, he had nothing to say and went back.

24. A COMPROMISE

Subsequently, the General Manager, having learned that the District Manager was a fellow-townsmen of mine, asked him to request me, as a personal favour, to surrender a portion of the land, mentioning a piece on the west side of Sheepmarket Street. When the district magistrate communicated this to me I said: "What you ask would spoil the property, but if a piece of land on the east side of that street, including the pond, would suit the Railway Company, that might be discussed in a friendly way."

After this reply of mine had been communicated to the authorities several gentlemen called upon me to discuss it. As an exceptional arrangement, which was not to be regarded as a precedent, it was agreed that the land on the east side, including the pond, some land on the south-west of the Kiangsi Guild fronting the river, and another piece on the east at the foot of the Kwan

Hill, together with that on the east of the railway line, should change hands. It was a compromise. I gave them the land as a present; and they gave me some money as a favour. Each party drew up a deed of bestowal for exchange, and each kept a duplicate copy as evidence.

25. PREACHING THE GOSPEL IN MY NATIVE PLACE

In the autumn of 1907, the first conference of all the Missions having work in the province of Chekiang was held in the hall of the China Inland Mission, Shanghai, and I was chosen to represent my own Mission. The Rev. Dr. J. R. Goddard of the American Baptist Mission was elected as chairman and I as vice-chairman.

After this conference I visited my native place and proclaimed the Word of God in the Ancestral Hall of my Clan. Some five years previously I had preached there for nine nights in succession, and had followed the methods suggested by Dr. Ernest Faber in his book, *The Fruits of Civilisation*. Although this line of approach was interesting, no fruit followed. This time I confined myself to speaking on "Grace and Truth," as recorded in the opening words of St. John's Gospel. The result was that a number were brought under the influence of the Gospel. As there was then no place of worship in the prefectural city of Changchow, I bade them go to the Southern Presbyterian Mission at Kiangyin, which was some twelve or thirteen English miles away. The pastor there was an old pupil of mine.

26. BUILDING MY HOME

In the spring of 1908 the building of my new house to the east of the church was completed. Just before mov-

ing in, one Saturday night the kitchen caught fire. One of the sawyers engaged to saw the planks had accidentally dropped the ashes of his pipe among the sawdust, and this during the night set the planks on fire, some of the pillars even igniting. Our serving-woman hearing a door open, feared there was a thief and raised an alarm. In this way the fire was discovered in time to extinguish it before the house was burnt down.

I had originally intended crossing the river to go to Siaoshan on that Saturday, but had been prevented. In this way I was enabled to take action. Still more noteworthy was the fact that the accidental opening of a door should arouse the serving-woman. Was not this a token of God's great mercy?

27. I FULFIL A VOW

In the autumn of 1909, the first year of the Boy Emperor, Hsuan Tung, I called to mind the fact that I had now preached the Gospel in Chekiang for several tens of years. In the course of my meditations I wondered what reply I should give if the Lord should say: "When you received the Word in Soochow, you vowed that you would return to your native place and commence a work there. Up to the present, how much have you done for your native place?"

Without further delay, I therefore arranged with the British and Foreign Bible Society to send two boxes of Scriptures addressed to me at Soochow. Then, taking a supply of tracts and other Christian literature, I went and visited each place where my relatives and friends lived, preaching the Gospel to them.

A few days later the Rev. Lacy L. Little, of the American Presbyterian Mission South, invited me to

speak at a three days' conference in Kiangyin. As my second son was a teacher in the school belonging to that Mission, I begged leave of absence for him, and with a hired boat we proceeded to visit a number of market towns in my native district. In these places I pasted up scrolls, distributed literature, and preached the Word for a period of twenty days. To a certain extent this helped to fulfil my vow.

28. PREACHING AT CHANGCHOW

As the books dispatched from Shanghai had miscarried, I was obliged to go to Changchow to find them, and this unexpected move was overruled for good. It so happened that a special series of evangelistic services had been arranged and widely advertised in that city, but the appointed preacher had been called away. My arrival coincided with this emergency, and I was invited to carry on the services. I consented to do so, and preached daily two hours each afternoon and two hours each evening.

It so happened that on the evening of the seventh day, after preaching for an hour, my head began to swim and my legs to tremble during the singing of a hymn. I immediately sat down and prayed in secret: "O Lord, since Thou hast given me grace to fulfil my duty to my native place, and hast granted me this unexpected opportunity of preaching here, give me the strength I need for these special meetings. May it not be with me, as it was with Joseph [Neesima] when preaching in a great Buddhist Monastery in Japan, that my strength should fail and that I should become ill as he did, for I know that the road Thou hast appointed me to travel, still has a long stretch ahead." When I had finished

praying, my health was restored, and I was enabled to fulfil my task.

When the Mission was ended, the Rev. John C. Hawk, of the American Methodist Episcopal Mission, told me that he had been able to tell the scholars of the city, who boasted that the Gospel would never flourish there, that I, the preacher, was a native of the city, that I had been a believer for forty years, a preacher for thirty years, and that I was then proclaiming the Gospel as a self-supporting witness. The Rev. A. C. Bowen also commented on the fact that I had strictly confined myself to the Gospel only. To this I answered: "On a previous occasion I preached for nine days in the Ancestral Hall of my own Clan, and in doing so I followed Dr. Ernest Faber's method, as set forth in his book, *The Fruits of Civilisation*, but though my preaching was appreciated no results followed. I then changed my plan, and preached for two days from the words, 'Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.' As fruit followed I had adhered to that method, believing that all the Lord's words are as a fire, and like a hammer which breaketh the rock. It is not by talent, nor by political power, but by reliance on God's Spirit."

The Mission being ended I was escorted to my boat and I returned to my home at Hangchow. Gathering my family together I recounted my experiences, and held a service of thanksgiving. But when I kneeled to pray I was seized with dizziness and was unable to rise. The members of my family thereupon carried me to my bed, and after having slept for three days I was able to come downstairs once more. Mr. Langman said I was much blessed in being able to do so, for Dr. Dubose who had been similarly affected after preaching had never recovered.

In the early summer of the following year, I heard that thirty persons had been baptised in Changchow as a result of the Mission I had been allowed to hold. On hearing this news I said: "We ought to give the thanks and praise to God. Though the hearts of the men of Changchow are like rocks, they have been broken by God's great hammer."

29. THE DEATH OF MY SECOND SON

In the second month of 1910 I went to hold conferences at a number of places, after which I returned to Yühang. During the evening service, just when I was about to return to Hangchow, one of my family servants arrived and handed me a letter, saying that my second son, *T'ien Hwa*, was ill. Putting the letter in my pocket we concluded worship. I then discussed with the converts their affairs, and when all had dispersed I opened the letter. Then I learned that a telegram had been received at home from Kiangyin reporting my son's death.

At this time there was no preacher at Yühang, so the leaders of the work came to confer with me. When they had finished, my servant came and asked me if I had read the letter. I answered: "The letter reports my son's death, there is therefore no great need for haste." I told him to go to bed, and that he would receive instructions in the morning. After further conference and prayer with the leaders we all retired to rest.

Because my son was very dear to me, I laid my head upon the pillow and wept, until weighed down with grief. But after a time I rebuked myself, saying: "Are you distressed to such a degree that you have forgotten the love of God? Is there any conceivable situation in

which the love of God fails? From your youth up have you ever known His love to come short?" I was bound to confess, "No." Then I reflected: "Since His love can never fail, is not this experience included in His love? Do you believe that all things work together for good to those who love God? If you do, ought you to grieve as you have done?"

Then the full meaning of what I had done flashed upon me, and throwing my clothes around me I arose, and kneeling down confessed my sin, saying: "O merciful Lord! before I knew Thee I was frequently at the brink of death, but because of Thy great love Thou didst protect me. Later, after I had learned, through Thy great grace, to know my Saviour, I have also passed through many dangers and difficulties. It was all because of Thy great love that Thou didst save me. Now I know that even in the death of this my second son Thy grace is certainly present. I pray for Thy forgiveness for the sin of inordinate grief." I then laid myself down quietly and slept. The next day I returned home, and sent men to bring the body home, that it might be interred outside the Kenshan Gate.

30. THE MISSION'S EXECUTIVE INVESTIGATE¹

A few weeks later Mr. Meadows, the Mission's superintendent in the province, went to Shanghai to attend the meetings of the China Council and told the Mission's Executive of the loss I had sustained. I acknowledge their kindness in praying for me. Knowing that my son's character was upright, and that he had been steadfast in

¹ This title and chapter must not be read as though it represented the Mission's intention; rather it reflects a Chinese view-point and Chinese modesty.

doctrine, and recognising my heavy grief, the Council requested Mr. Meadows to write me an official letter of consolation. A few days later they commissioned him to visit my home, to ascertain my state of heart, and report to them. Mr. Meadows made careful note of my behaviour, and recognised that it had not changed by reason of my son's death. It was only when he was on the point of leaving that he said: "Your bearing of this sorrow abundantly proves that God has strengthened and upheld you. When the Mission's Executive receive my letter they will praise God unceasingly."

31. A GOSPEL CAMPAIGN AT NANKING

In the autumn of the same year, a great industrial exhibition was held at Nanking, the merchants of every province taking part. And the visitors came in multitudes as dense as the clouds. The various Missions in Nanking, availing themselves of this great opportunity, arranged a special series of evangelistic meetings, erecting a commodious mat pavilion near to the main entrance for this purpose. They also invited a number of pastors and teachers to be honorary preachers at the services, and I was among the number. As Nanking was the capital of my native province I was glad to take my part, and in this way do something to fulfil my vow. It is for this reason I mention it here.

32. FAMILY WORSHIP

In the year 1911 I entered upon my sixtieth year, and I began to reflect upon the uncertainty of life. The debt I had owed to my native place I had in some small measure repaid, but I felt that in my home family worship

had fallen short of its ideal. It was not that it had ever been suspended, but at times, owing to callers and other business, it had been shortened, and at times even perfunctory. I felt that some morning, when I should see His Face, I should be unable to avoid His rebuke for having come short in the instruction of my family. I therefore, from that time onward, set apart a room upstairs, as a little sanctum where, morning by morning, after breakfast, no matter whether there was business to attend to or not, we could as a family retire for prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, and thus secure the much needed spiritual culture.

33. AN OUT-STATION AT NANSHA

On the 18th day of the third moon, an out-station was opened at Ch'ae-lu-wan, within the prefecture of Shao-hing. Through the leadership of a convert from Anchang a number of persons in the Nansha district turned to the Lord. As it was too far to go regularly to Anchang, an out-station was opened in the village named above.

34. A WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE

During the summer, when I was having an additional window put into my bedroom, I ascended the ladder to show the workmen what I wished. While doing so the ladder fell backwards and threw me to the ground. Though I was picked up unconscious, I made a good recovery. By the mercy of God I had fallen where there were no bricks, and therefore did not sustain any broken bones or serious bodily hurt. But for some days I was obliged to keep to my bed, and could lie only on my back. When the Mission's Executive heard of what had

happened they sent me a letter of sympathy, and expressed their thankfulness that I had not been killed.

The 7th day of the first moon had been my birthday. As I knew that my friends in the various missionary societies desired to congratulate me when I reached my sixtieth year, I had repeatedly returned them evasive answers when they had made inquiries. But when the date had passed I told them. Now that the Lord had spared my life, I desired to hold a thanksgiving service. So at the close of the seventh month, I invited all my colleagues of the several societies to join with me in praising God. My sons, my sons-in-law, and others, availed themselves of this occasion to present their congratulations. The service was conducted by the Rev. Chang Ying-kwei, of the American Presbyterian Mission North, and he read the 103rd Psalm, to show our remembrance and gratitude for the Lord's great grace.

35. PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

On the 18th day of the eighth moon of 1911, I and my eldest son, *T'ien Lin*,¹ went to the city of Fuyang. At that time, though we did not know it, the Revolution had broken out in Wuchang. I had intended to be back in Hangchow for the administration of the Lord's Supper on the last Sunday of the month. But a day or two before that date I received a letter from my family urging my immediate return, as the officials and the gentry were in a state of panic owing to the news of the Revolution. Looking at things from my family point of view, I felt I ought to return at once; but I reflected that at such a time the bandits, living among the mountains, would seize upon this opportunity to raid the towns and

¹ *Heaven's Choice.*

villages. I therefore decided to make a tour of the stations both to comfort the converts and to help them organise a force of special constables for the emergency.

Sending my son home, with a request that Mr. Langman would act for me during my absence, I went forward exhorting the Christians at each place not to place too much confidence in the many rumours that would abound, but to await trustworthy tidings from the capital. In some places the gentry came to ask my advice, and in most places I encouraged them to organise local bands of police. It so happened that in these districts the people did not suffer from the bandits as seriously as elsewhere, and this was attributed, in part at least, to the effective service rendered by the constabulary arranged for by the churches.

36. LAID LOW WITH DYSENTERY

After Christmas, in the closing days of 1911, the first year of the Republic, I went to Anchi with Pastor Tsiang. As the caretaker of the local church had been dead some time, the premises were in a very dirty condition. When superintending the cleaning of the place I must have been poisoned, for I became very ill. My countenance became sallow and strained; then dysentery set in. Being so reduced that I almost despaired of life, I was taken back to Hangchow, whither I recalled my children from Soochow.

At that time a conference of missionaries belonging to the China Inland Mission was being held in the city. They at once sent a deputation to see me and express their sympathy. They urged me to take complete rest, and I complied by remaining in my room for more than a month. But as my ailment still continued, I began to

put the affairs of the Church in order. I sent all the deeds of church property which I had bought in various places to the local district magistrate's office for registration. All these I entered in a general ledger, so that whoever should succeed me would find all in order.

By the Lord's mercy I began to recover, but Dr. Duncan Main told me that I was seriously debilitated, and needed rest and change. The Executive of the China Inland Mission asked Dr. Cox to come to Hangchow to look after me, and later, they urged me to go to Chinkiang for change. But though both Dr. Cox and Dr. Main exhorted me to go away, I felt unable to do so because of the pressing duties of the Church.

37. I AM LAID LOW AGAIN

During the early summer of 1914 I went to Siaoshan to conduct a funeral. It was extremely hot weather, and owing to a failure to seal the coffin down securely with varnish, I was again poisoned. When I returned home I was seriously ill once more. I had promised to return to Siaoshan one month later for a wedding, but being unequal to the journey I sent a letter to Pastor Tsiang, asking him to act for me. Though I had given careful instructions, my messenger missed the post and failed to tell me until it was too late to remedy his oversight. There was nothing for it but for me to go. But though I travelled in a sedan-chair the exertion was too great, and I had a serious relapse. Uncertain whether I should recover, I revised the Minutes of the Mission's Conference recently held, and amended the regulations concerning wedding and funeral ceremonies, as I had been requested by the Conference. I was enabled to send these to the printer and to correct the proofs.

Though I was so ill that I could not digest a single grain of rice or even retain arrowroot, I was led to try a little thin gruel made with glutinous rice. Marvellous to relate, it seemed just the thing. My trouble ceased, my digestion improved, and I gradually recovered strength. I had been healed without medicine by God's great grace.

38. THE OPENING OF HWASHAE

Late in the autumn of the same year, a place of worship was opened at Hwashae in the prefecture of Shaohing. This was brought about by a convert from Anchang who had opened a weaver's shop in that village and had led his fellow-weavers to accept Christ. Being too far from Anchang for regular attendance there, they opened this preaching centre in their midst. I invited Mr. Langman to go with me and assist in the opening services.

Towards the close of the fifth year of the Republic, this place was constituted a regular out-station, and during the winter of the ninth year of the Republic, the converts by a great effort purchased some newly erected premises for a permanent place of worship.

39. A SECOND OUT-STATION IN NANSHA

In the early part of 1915, an out-station was opened in Sin-wan-ti, a market town in the prefecture of Shaohing. From the time of the opening of an out-station at Ch'ae-lu-wan (see Chapter xxxiii.) the number of persons turning to the Lord had gradually increased. This was especially the case in the neighbourhood of Sin-wan-ti, and for this reason this second out-station was opened.

Unexpectedly, three weeks after the opening of this place, the local roughs destroyed the building. But in consequence of an amicable settlement which followed, the very men who were responsible for the trouble assisted us in securing new premises. And in addition a primary school was opened.

40. COMMEMORATIVE GATHERINGS

In November 1916 the China Inland Mission, to which I belong, commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of the Lammermuir party in the city of Hangchow. As this also coincided with the fortieth year of my pastorate, I availed myself of this opportunity to express my gratitude to God for all His mercies to me. The Executive of the Mission appointed the Rev. J. Vale to attend as their representative, while there were Chinese and foreign delegates from all the C.I.M. stations in the province. In addition there were present representatives from the churches of other societies in Hangchow, and from the stations and out-stations over which I had the oversight. It was truly a great time.¹

41. A THIRD OUT-STATION IN NANSHA

In the early spring of 1917 an out-station was opened at Twelfth Dam, in the prefecture of Shaohing. This was a subdivision of the Ch'ae-lu-wan out-station, and

¹ A detailed account of Pastor Ren's commemorative rejoicings was published in *China's Millions* for March 1917, mainly from the gracious pen of Dr. Duncan Main. The Communion Service was conducted by Mr. Hudson Taylor's eldest son, Herbert, who had been one of the young people who had arrived in Hangchow with the Lammermuir party fifty years before.—ED.

constituted the third in the district of Nansha. Mr. Herbert Hudson Taylor accompanied me to the opening services.

42. COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES AT ANCHANG

Later in the same year we held some commemorative services at Anchang, to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the opening of the work at that centre, when Feng Kiu-luh established his shop for the sale of weights and scales. Now in addition to this place four out-stations had been opened. How great is the grace of God! At the closing service I reminded the people that the thing most to fear was boasting. Peter's fall followed his boast, that although others forsook Christ he never would. Do not the Classics say: "By boasting of goodness, goodness is lost. By boasting of ability, merit is forfeited." And "The most meritorious man in the world is not qualified to boast." Did not Columbus, the great hero who discovered the New World, find himself in prison and finally die in poverty? His enemies secured his downfall because of his boasting. Our enemy, the Roaring Lion, is the one we should fear.

43. THE FOURTH OUT-STATION IN NANSHA

In the autumn another out-station was opened in the district of Nansha, this time at Santai Bridge. There were then more than one hundred converts and inquirers, and this place was opened for their convenience. It so happened that trouble similar to that at Sin-wan-ti occurred here, but a happy settlement was eventually made.

44. THE FIFTH OUT-STATION IN NANSHA

In the first month of 1918, another out-station was opened in Nansha, this time at Taiping Bridge. This centre was the fruit of Sin-wan-ti, and there were several tens of converts.

45. AN OUT-STATION OPENED AT TANG SHAN

In the summer of 1920, an out-station was opened at Tang Shan, through the fruitful life of one of the Anchang converts who lived there. There were then more than forty converts and a number of inquirers.

As historical details and photographs of these out-stations have been prepared for use elsewhere, the facts are only summarised here.¹

46. CLOSING REMARKS ²

In 1877 when the Tamarisk, to the disgrace of his office, was made Pastor at Hangchow, the Church was fortunate in having the Venerable Pastor Wang to guide and instruct it. [Then follow the names of all the preachers at the various centres.] Once every month all the leaders from the various stations came to Hangchow for three days' fellowship, for searching the Scriptures, for giving reports, and for discussing their difficulties. Such gatherings should be called: "Bindings together," or "All Embracing Aids to Harmonise the Moral Nature."

¹ We are not sure to what publication, whether Chinese or English, Pastor Ren refers.—ED.

² In this closing portion of his autobiography Pastor Ren reviews a number of events. The original is packed with names, and we have therefore given only a précis of selected portions.

At that time all the expenses, except my own support, were paid by the Mission in Shanghai, the moneys passing through Pastor Wang's hands. In 1881, after Missionary Wills [see p. 93] had left Hangchow, Mr. Hudson Taylor came to Hangchow to see me. In all he came three times.

On the first occasion, he told me all about the method employed by Dr. J. L. Nevius in Shantung. Previously Dr. Nevius had laboured in Chekiang, but on going to Shantung he had changed his methods of work.¹ Buildings had not been rented, but churches had been established in the homes of the converts, and the responsibilities had been laid upon the local converts. Thus the old way of the Mission Boards bearing the expenses had been done away.

Mr. Hudson Taylor commended this method to me. He also showed me that there were then five societies at work in the city of Hangchow. He therefore urged me to give more heed to the more needy out-stations. In reply I said: "I look upon what Dr. Nevius has done as an excellent example; but I do not attain unto it. I have already disgraced my office by accepting it, and I am still like a child who cannot walk without support. My sun has not yet reached its meridian, and there is still time for me to commit some disastrous mistake. I dare not be hasty, for to be so would be to court my own downfall. I dare not suddenly change the *status quo*, not even though I were to use a long whip. I can only proceed slowly and cautiously."

To all this Mr. Hudson Taylor replied: "With men this is impossible, but not with God. Pray about it, and the day will come when you will feel that it can be done."

¹ Mr. Hudson Taylor was deeply interested in Dr. Nevius' work and by permission republished his book on Mission methods.

The second time Mr. Hudson Taylor came he said: "I beg you to study *The Acts of the Apostles* and see if you can find whether they rented churches, and paid preachers or not. We missionaries coming from the West have been acting as a mother with her child. To nurse and carry in the bosom are the duties of motherhood. But to persist in so doing, when the child is grown up, would be to allow love to become injurious. It is now more than ten years since the Mission began work in Hangchow. You are already established, and are seeking to establish others. We are now needing men to open work in Kiangsi, and I propose to transfer one of your preachers to that needy province." To this I replied: "When tempted to act suddenly, it is better to be slow and cautious." Mr. Taylor said: "You can make a *temporary* appointment to supply the vacancy, and the Mission will bear the expense." I answered: "Agreed."

Upon the third occasion, when Mr. Hudson Taylor came to Hangchow, he said: "When the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, since it was their first experience of such an event, the Lord caused an east wind to blow all night, so that the dry land was revealed *before* the people began to move. But when they came to the Jordan, it was not so. It was not *until* the priests' feet had been made wet with the water, that the way through was made bare. In the first case, the people had only just left Egypt; in the second case, they were just about to enter the Promised Land. In the first case, they were like infants who needed to be carried in the bosom. When they came to enter the Promised Land, they were like men able to carry burdens. Had they at this latter time waited for the dry land to appear before going forward, I fear they would have waited in vain. I therefore beg you not to

wait any longer. I therefore propose that the preachers at Siaoshan, and at Yühang, be transferred elsewhere, and I must leave you and the churches to decide about the others. In a word, from the time that the two preachers are transferred from the places named, the salaries of the other preachers will no longer be found by the Mission. But the Mission will still accept responsibility for any premises that have been rented, and should there be any special and necessary expenses these can be reported, and they will be considered. But such assistance will cease, as you are able to aid yourselves. (These have now all ceased.) I have come to arrange these things with you. I have paid my vow. After this there will probably be no need for me to come again. You must trust in God. Do not be afraid; there are many praying for you."

During this same visit, one day when I was dining with Mr. Hudson Taylor and Pastor Wang, Mr. Hudson Taylor suddenly said to me: "I am old, Pastor Wang is old, and you, too, Pastor Ren, will become old also. Pay much attention to the young people who will hereafter join the Church."

To my astonishment it turned out as Mr. Taylor had said. Mr. Taylor never visited Hangchow again. Upon his last visit to our Flowery Land [in 1905] he had intended to come to Hangchow and Ning-po, but it so happened that after going to Ning-po he proceeded to Hunan, and from that province he received the Lord's call Home. All I have as a memorial of him is a photograph, taken of himself and of Messrs. Stevenson and Meadows in Shanghai, and another photograph taken in Hankow of himself with Dr. Martin and Dr. Griffith John.

[Pastor Ren then proceeds to tell of some of the preachers being transferred to other districts, and of some of the troubles of the Boxer period. He then records Pastor Wang's death, and some of the troubles which befell the churches. He then concludes as follows]:

In a small way we were able to keep step with Pioneer Nevius, and imitate the example he set us in Shantung. If Mr. Hudson Taylor were alive, and could see things as they are with his own eyes, I am sure he would be moved to rejoice, and would, to the limits of speech, extol the unbounded grace of our Heavenly Father.

For myself, I have, throughout my life, delighted in the Psalms, and whenever I have been in distress I have delighted to pray aloud by day and by night. This has greatly comforted my heart. The Psalm which I never forget is the one which contains the prayer of Moses: Psalm xc. To begin with I use verse 12, "So teach us to number our days," and then verse 17, "Let the beauty of our God be upon us," as Golden Texts. I am an old man now, and all that I have done has been while suffering much with chronic troubles. I fear that much that I have done may not be of permanent duration. Will all who read this, and all who remember and love me, pray for me.

The Old Husbandman of the Tamarisk Garden pens this record, in his own cottage, connected with the China Inland Mission self-supporting church, November 1921, *i.e.* in the first month of winter, in the tenth year of the Chinese Republic.

EPILOGUE

ENTRANCE INTO LIFE IMMORTAL

THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF THE REPUBLIC

THE SECOND DAY OF THE FIRST MOON

11TH FEBRUARY 1929

HEAVEN'S MORNING BREAKS

WE have come to the close of a fair pilgrimage, and the beloved pilgrim, whose steps we have followed by means of his own words, is now to pass beyond our gaze into the Celestial City. By the eye of faith he had seen its gates afar, and had also gazed upon something of its glory. He was now an aged traveller on the way everlasting, and had learned that eternal life was not "in innumerable years," but in "the breath of God in timeless things." And the timeless things were his; and best of all the Abiding Friend was with him. He was to prove that in the Valley of the Shadow he would not need the light of lamp, or the light of sun; for the Lord God was to give him light; and he was to reign for ever and ever. And He who told us this said: "Write: for these words are faithful and true."

And our venerable pilgrim would himself tell us so, could he conclude this story from the other side. But for the details of his death and of his funeral we are indebted to the Rev. W. H. Warren, who had been closely associated with the Pastor for many years.

"Pastor Ren had been born in February 1852, and he was to enter into Life Immortal in February 1929, seventy-seven years later. At the beginning of the month he was somewhat indisposed with what seemed an ordinary cold, but he fully hoped to be raised up to round off more completely the tasks committed to his

care. When I saw him, only a week before his death, he discussed the visitation of certain outstations, and invited me to assist. Two days later he conducted an afternoon meeting of three hours' duration, followed after supper by a protracted period of family worship.

"On Thursday, the next day, he was really ill, and after some hesitation a doctor from the Church Missionary Society's Hospital was sent for. Acting under his advice, the patient was removed to the hospital, where all that skill and love could do was done. But pneumonia had laid a firm hand upon the aged sufferer. Quietly but steadily his strength failed, and on the following Monday evening he rendered up his spirit to God who gave it.

"The body was conveyed back to the home, and was laid in state in the large guest-hall. On the following Friday, with an appropriate Christian service, in the presence of the family, his intimate associates, and a congregation that overflowed on to the verandah and grounds outside, the massive coffin was hermetically sealed so that it might be kept for interment later. It was uncertain then whether the youngest daughter, who had qualified as a medical practitioner in America, would be able to return in time for the final offices.

"As the absent daughter could not return before May, and as the local authorities insisted that the interment must take place within three months of decease, the family finally fixed upon April 10 as the date for the funeral, at the family cemetery outside the city of Hangchow.

"The Memorial Service was held on Tuesday, April 9, the Chapel being appropriately draped with webs of silk, all of subdued hues. The coffin rested before the rostrum covered with an embroidered pall, surmounted by a light framework wrought over with greenery and flowers. Some

four hundred persons were present, while representatives from the Church Missionary Society, the American Presbyterian Mission, the American Baptist Missionary Union, and the China Inland Mission all took part.

"As such an occasion could not, from a Chinese standpoint, be fittingly concluded without inviting the guests to partake of a meal, the family provided no fewer than fifty tables, each seating eight persons.

"On the following day, Wednesday, April 10, the Funeral Service took place in the Chapel at eight o'clock in the morning. This was conducted by myself. Immediately afterwards the cortège was marshalled, and this was no small task, as it was approximately half a mile long, and nearly two hours were needed to reach the cemetery. At the grave the brief Committal Service was conducted by the Rev. L. P. Nyi of the Church Missionary Society."

The removal of a strong and dominant personality is always a crucial experience. And this is especially the case if the one withdrawn is the originator and the father of a cause. Yet if such men could abide one of life's greatest lessons would be lost. If it was even expedient that the Man Christ Jesus should go away from the mortal view of His disciples, how much more is this true of a human agent on whom we may too much rely. Bereavement compels us to cast ourselves on Him who is the Eternal Source and Author of all good, and to put our trust in Him. As we thank God for such a man as Pastor Ren let us remember the churches which are now thrown back on God.

What the future of those churches will be and how they will develop remains to be seen. Of one thing we may be sure, God has His men for every emergency.

Pastor Ren was, as we have seen, cradled amid the storms of the Taiping rebellion. And the perils and the exigencies of the present and the future are not unknown to the Head of the Church. It was Luther, who knew what storms could be, who said: "We say to our Lord God, that if He will have His Church, He must keep it, for we cannot."

And God's best gifts are generally embodied in a life. It is this which makes biography so inspiring. God gave some to be apostles; some, prophets; some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the building up of the body of Christ. God's manifold grace is expressed in men of divers types. It was the late Bishop Westcott who said: "One of our most urgent needs is to realise the existence of permanent differences between men as the foundation of the Divine government of the world."

Pastor Ren, for instance, was not a Pastor Hsi, though both men had much in common. They were both autocratic and independent. They both possessed great strength of will; they were both possessed of practical resourcefulness and of capacity for affairs. But Pastor Hsi was more of a mystic, and he was more distrustful of the foreigner than Pastor Ren. Indeed, Pastor Ren, while maintaining his own independence, manifested a considerable capacity for friendship with foreigners. He has been described as a Christian Nehemiah, a man of affairs; apt to deal with the business of the House of God; specially qualified for official intercourse; and not unduly perturbed by the modern Sanballat and Tobiah.

Such a gift as Pastor Ren to the Church in China quickens hope concerning the days to come, for "the need, the peril, and the greatness of the time will be the measure of the gift of Christ."

THE CHINA INLAND MISSION

The China Inland Mission, founded in 1865, has to-day approximately 1200 missionaries located in 275 central stations with 2000 out-stations. From the commencement of the work more than 120,000 have been baptized, and 1235 Churches have been organized.

The story of its financial supplies, for appeals for funds and collections are not authorized, is stranger than fiction. It constitutes a convincing proof of the providential care of the living God.

The story of its expansion strengthens faith in the belief that God rules in the kingdom of men. Despite the wrath of man, and the malice of the adversary, God has set and maintained before His Church an open door. That truth has been especially emphasized by the painful experiences of 1900 and 1927. Each decade of the Mission's history has been marked by its own distinctive feature.

In the first decade the Mission struck its roots in China, and began work in the unoccupied districts of the nearer provinces.

In the second decade it explored the distant provinces, and opened stations in all the unoccupied provinces but one.

In the third decade there was rapid expansion and consolidation both in China and in new Home centres.

In the fourth decade a new era dawned dating from China's defeat by Japan. This period was saddened by the terrible Boxer persecutions and the subsequent need for reconstruction.

The fifth decade was ushered in by Asia's triumph over Europe in Japan's defeat of Russia, a revolutionary fact in the history of the world. In the history of the Mission's work in China it was marked by mass movements and revival, and by the reaching out to the remote areas of Sinkiang and the Tibetan border.

The sixth, and the seventh decade still in progress, have been marked by the rise of Nationalism and civil strife. At the time of writing the outstanding features in the Mission's history are the handing over of authority to Chinese Church leaders and the inauguration of a forward movement into regions still unevangelized.

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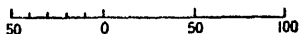
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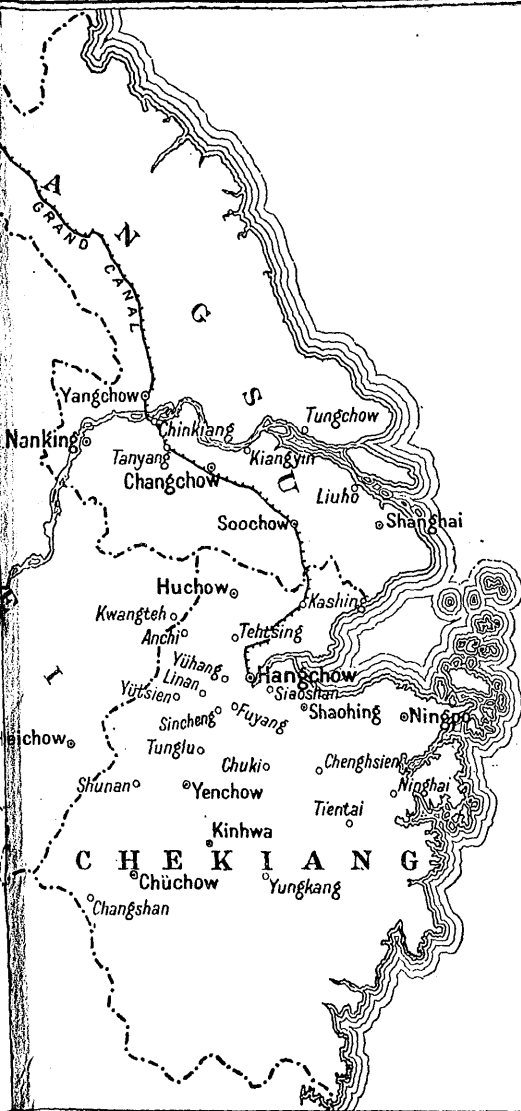
Sketch Map of
Part of China
to illustrate the
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PASTOR REN

(The map shows most of the Cities
mentioned but not the villages.)



Scale of Miles





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